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EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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AMERICAN FARM SCENE—Currier Print
(Courtesy the Old Print Shop)

Footlight Frenzy

PRESENTING LILY MARS. By Booth Tarkington. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1933. $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

WE began by being disappointed in this most recent of Tarkington novels. The opening reminded us vaguely of other books of his, and seemed not so convincing. The characters of the playwright and his mother did not immediately take hold. The small-town scenery seemed too familiar. The initial presentation of Lily Mars appeared to us rather poor farce. Incidentally, this is *not* Tarkington's "finest novel since 'Alice Adams' or 'The Magnificent Ambersons,'" as the publishers tell you on the dust-cover. For one thing, it rather "dates." But it *is* a good story of the American theatre of Tarkington's era. It contains humorous characterization of perfectly recognizable theatrical types, and sympathetic characterization as well, full of shrewd Tarkingtonesque observation and understanding. And the story improves as it progresses, till one finds one's self absorbed in it. Lily becomes a real and diverting person. Those around her take on color and substance. The study of Lily's temperament, and its immediate effect upon all males within sight, increases steadily in effectiveness.

One must remember that Tarkington, the veteran novelist, is now judged, perforce, by his phenomenal writing. But there are scenes, there is dialogue, in "Lily Mars," that would immediately establish the reputation of a new writer. Tarkington evinces admirable command of his material—nor does he spoil his dénouement. And perhaps just because of the Yankee humor incessantly playing about his principal character, one is aware of the depth of his human sympathy. Lily becomes convincingly lovable. We shall undoubtedly see her upon the screen, if not upon the actual stage, in the not so distant future. Her "scenes" with Isabelle Hedrington, the leading lady, whose Romeo (Eugene) she snares with her large-eyed innocence, are superb, with the mutual gestures of noble renunciation on the part of both actresses. Tarkington knows well how to present that puzzling twilight zone in the temperament of an actress, in which it is so difficult to know where gen-

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Louis Bromfield Looks Backward

THE FARM. By Louis Bromfield. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1933. $2.50.

Reviewed by HENRY STEELE COMMAGER

"THE FARM," Mr. Bromfield explains in a charming prefatory letter to his children, "is the story of a way of living which has largely gone out of fashion save in a few half-forgotten corners and in a few families which have stuck to it with admirable stubbornness in spite of everything. It was and is a good way of life, and although you live to be as old as the Colonel, I doubt that you will find a better way. I counsel you to cherish it. It has in it two fundamentals which were once and may be again intensely American characteristics. These are integrity and idealism." Mr. Bromfield has described that way of life and celebrated those characteristics through the history of his family and of the farm which was the focal point of the family for a hundred years. He has at the same time made his story a medium for an interpretation of the course of American history. For in this skilful and often beautiful reconstruction, the farm becomes something of a symbol: it represents not only the triumph of the Colonel and of Jamie over the wilderness and the binding together of the family and the creation of wealth and beauty; it represents a phase of the life of the American people—a dream realized and dissipated, a Utopia created and destroyed. "The Farm" is permeated with a nostalgia for a way of life that was splendid and is forever gone—with a nostalgia such as we find in "John Brown's Body" and in the stories of Stark Young and in the "Son of the Middle Border."

Like these books, "The Farm" celebrates that provincialism whose disappearance is one of the irreparable tragedies of the modern America—a deep-rooted attachment to the soil, to old houses and old things, an intimate sense of belonging to a community and to a tradition which curiously preserved individuality. The men and women who stride so valiantly across the pages of "The Farm" had their roots deep in the soil of this Ohio country that they had all but created, and they drew sustenance from it. They belonged there as truly as did the old houses whose histo-

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Huneker, Man of the Tribe

BY BERNARD SMITH

IN any survey of American criticism since the 1890's, from a genetic point of view, three names necessarily stand out above all others: James Huneker, J. E. Spingarn, and Van Wyck Brooks. It does not matter what your own esthetic bias may be: when you have listed the critical ideas, principles, and sentiments which first matured in this country in the twentieth century, you will find that the most significant and most potent of them came from one or another of these three. From the first came impressionism and Mencken; from the second, expressionism; from the third, the application to literature of the liberal's criticism of American society.

Of the three, Brooks and Huneker have been the more important, for they alone of the host of critics who have written books, edited magazines, and taught classes in universities during the past thirty years have been able to create schools and attract followers. Spingarn startled the academicians for a while, and unquestionably his Crocean ideas have seeped deeply into the thinking of a considerable part of our literary population, but as a leader, a personality, he was never prominent and is now almost forgotten. Today his sole descendants are the esthetes who still somehow manage, in the shelter of precious magazines, to keep themselves aloof from reality and to shirk the responsibilities of the intellectual in a community that needs philosophical decisions, ideals, and purposes. To them the artist is still answerable to nobody for what he chooses to do, and so, of course, nobody cares what they choose to do. In the Brooks and Huneker schools, however, there is yet some vitality, although now, perhaps, it is the vitality of desperation.

If, finally, an attempt is made to pick the one man who has most affected American taste and criticism in these three decades, it is probable that not too many dissenting votes would greet the nomination of Huneker. The fact is that Brooks's force has been confined within relatively narrow limits. Since among his disciples have been Randolph Bourne, Waldo Frank, Lewis Mumford, Matthew Josephson, and Newton Arvin, it would be silly to deny that he has affected the intellectual life of the country, so far as literature is concerned, enormously. But, after all, how much weight does that carry to the reading public at large? Even a superficial examination of the mass of journalistic criticism and reviewing which until about the end of the twenties determined the literary preferences and prejudices of the nation, will prove that Huneker and his friends—particularly Mencken, who alone surpassed him—have had by far the greater influence. The causes and origins of that influence are perfectly understandable.

There were only "respectable" critics until the 1890's. "Culture"—which means the universities and the powerful magazines—was a possession of the provincial aristocracy. Thus the moral conventions of a primitive middle-class society, dedicated to the protection of private property and the preservation of the family, almost invariably dictated a judgment of art. Poe, who had attacked the habitual interming-ling of esthetic and moral opinion, had left no disciples, and nobody (certainly not Poe) had ever attacked, even by implication, the system of morality itself. Critics, as a rule, looked backward, and when they looked at the present they looked at bourgeois England. Gentility throttled the slightest hint of heresy. Henry James introduced Flaubert and Turgeniev, but failed to alter the dominating principle. Howells introduced the Russians, but bowed to Boston. The end was a wilderness of Hamilton Wright Mabies and Henry Van Dykes.

The traditions of a mercantile community are incompatible with empire. When the United States became rich and heterogeneously populous, when it began to feel its strength and take an interest in the spoils of China's exploitation and in Spain's presence on the North American continent, the parochial upper classes could no longer hope to impose their social dogmas upon the arts. A new bourgeoisie was arising, a class founded upon industrial capitalism and international trade and removed from the immediate sources of its income. It was a city class, with several racial strains, cosmopolitan, acquisitive, conscious of its power, eager to enjoy the fruits of its wealth and with sufficient leisure to do so. It was, moreover, a class susceptible to the mood of nineteenth century science, to which it was indebted for its material possessions and social rank. It expressed that susceptibility in mildly disillusioned, experimental, epicurean, and pragmatic attitudes. It was, in the arts, at once unafraid of sensual experience and willing to investigate realities. It is this that has been called the "modern spirit."

In criticism the new temper found its way into the work of such men as Harry Thurston Peck, Percival Pollard, Vance Thompson, and James Huneker. The latter two founded, in 1895, *M'lle New York*, a magazine modelled after the Parisian boulevard papers. Thompson stated that

This Week

GRATEFUL HOUND
A Poem by WILLARD MAAS

BEGINNING THE 20TH CENTURY
By JOSEPH WARD SWAIN
Reviewed by Sidney B. Fay

TWENTY YEARS A-GROWING
By MAURICE O'SULLIVAN
Reviewed by Padraic Colum

BAUDELAIRE
By ENID STARKIE
Reviewed by Ernest Boyd

MRS. EGG AND OTHER BARBARIANS
By THOMAS BEER
Reviewed by John Chamberlain

THE PROGRESS OF JULIUS
By DAPHNE DU MAURIER
Reviewed by Elmer Davis

THE TRAGEDY OF RUSSIA
By WILL DURANT
Reviewed by Arthur Ruhl

THE FOLDER
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

Next Week or Later

DEATH IN THE DESERT
By EDA LOU WALTON

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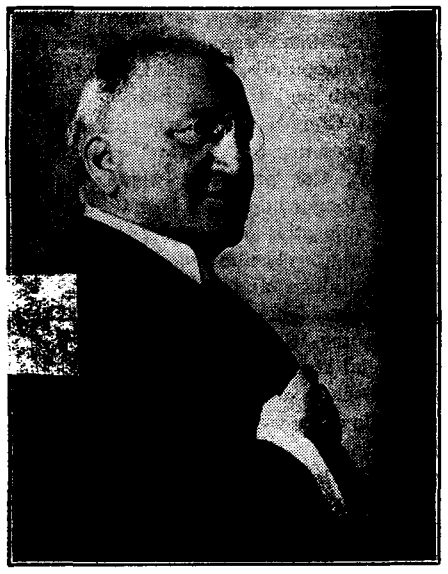
"*M'lle New York* is not concerned with the public. Her only ambition is to disintegrate some small portion of the public into its original component parts—the aristocracies of birth, wit, learning, and art, and the joyously vulgar mob." A noisy, brash, and crudely snobbish announcement, it explains adequately why his paper was not distinguished. It is memorable only as the fertile seed of a pose that was afterwards immensely fashionable—a pose that was doubtlessly inevitable, and curable only by disaster. For twenty-five years later, when the United States found itself literally sitting on top of the world, and all the luxuries and vanities of a diseased civilization were made available for the amusement of the metropolitan bourgeoisie, the latter began to take on a certain assurance and ease, but it lost nothing of its egotism until it was stripped, in the early thirties, of its wealth and security and left embittered and bewildered.

M'lle New York is well forgotten. It was adolescent and postured, its pranks were undergraduate, its bohemianism fake. Yet it was an indication of a growing worldliness in our letters and a disposition to explore the world without benefit of a clerical guidance. Its esthetic catholicity, its hostility toward the "Puritan," and its interest in Nietzsche and Stirner were healthy, as were its scoffing at the business man's piety and its determination to describe women as something less than saints. It is regrettable that all of this smacked of naughtiness rather than considered intelligence, for it is undeniable that the industrial middle classes injected



JAMES HUNEKER

some of the elements of realism and rationalism into our traditional *mores*, and the quiet dignity that comes from a sincere pride in achievement would have been appropriate. But, no doubt, the first to taste strange and sinful fruit are always a little too conscious of their unconventionality. So Thompson's magnum opus, "French Portraits," a volume of superficial appreciations of the younger French and Belgian writers, was excessively ecstatic. In manner and taste it was wholly indigenous to the nineties — the work of a dazzled American cosmopolite, graduated proudly from the impressionist school. There is no reason why anyone should read it today.

It was exactly that degree of literary development which Huneker represented and of which he became the master. He did not go beyond it; he merely improved it. He made it—by virtue of his own brilliance—synonymous with the standpoint of what is often called "the civilized man." It would be difficult to find anything in his fifteen books that would not fit the pages of Thompson's magazine, but it would be equally difficult to find anything that is not expressed more plausibly, with greater wit, with neater phrase, than it might have been by any of his contemporaries.

There is no need here, however, to extoll him, for he has already been recommended to posterity. Mencken's essay in "A Book of Prefaces" is a warm and persuasive tribute to a friend. He has even been deified—by G. E. De Mille in "Literary Criticism in America." It is no effort to grant that some of his achievements were praiseworthy. He introduced to us a host of European writers, painters, and musicians, and made the commonplaces of European intellectual life familiar to at least our "cultured" circles. He fought against provincialism and the bias of Victorian morality, and fought for an elementary sophistication and tolerance. His epitaph may justly be the label that Mencken applied to him—"anti-Philistine."

But in spite of all that, no one is amazed to find that rereading him in 1933 is a depressing exercise in fortitude. The time has long passed when the "foreign devils" of the arts were loathed and feared, and the war against gentility and censorship seems remote. The truth is that the thrills which he supplied are beyond recall; his job was well enough done to leave him, in the form of his books, nothing else to do. There was no substance in him, no depth, no wisdom. He was not, in the real sense of the word, an "intellect." To observe him when he left the narrow sphere of esthetic sensation was to witness a shower of smart platitudes. His papers on other subjects than the purely esthetic, with rare exceptions, were empty; they were in the glib journalese of a man who had read a great many books on these various themes, but too many of them second-rate.

His surviving friends remind us that he was, more than anything else, a "personality," sparkling, keen, colorful—one, nevertheless, that is not impressive to the cool scrutiny of a new generation. The man may be summed up in two words: "sympathy" and "enthusiasm." The first trait doubtlessly made him an amiable companion and a superb café conversationalist; because of it, too, he was receptive to new ideas and new ways of looking at human life, unlike the spinsters of the old academies. But it was also responsible for his preposterous discovery of gold in innumerable ores of the basest metal; he was one of those who helped bring over here the puny poets and philosophers of a decadent European society, and he helped encourage their American imitators.

His was an epoch of revolt by the bourgeois leisure classes against the tyranny of the Protestant ethic and hence of experimenting with novel sensations. The epoch ended with the rejection of "sympathy" as a principle of criticism. There is no longer cause for boasting in a willingness to lend an ear to every new prophet, nor is there distinction in a capacity for discovering entertainment in the esoteric and exotic. Everybody's doing it now, and serious critics often wonder whether the American people have any definite taste or discrimination at all. As for his "enthusiasm" — the books themselves bear testimony to the ephemeral attractiveness of so personal a quality. The piquant bubbles are mostly gone and the drink is more than a little stale. It is the privilege of a child to be, simply, "enthusiastic," but the subject of his "enthusiasm" is the test of an adult.

As long ago as 1917 Mencken was hard put to it to name a really sound and permanent book among the many that Huneker had already published, finally taking refuge in the damning statement that "one no longer reads them for their matter, but for their manner." The two he did choose —"Chopin" and "Old Fogy"—are volumes of musical commentary. His instinct was correct: a large technical knowledge combined with the rhetorical virtuosity of a superior impressionist may produce pretty fair musical criticism. Much more is demanded in the criticism of literature. The latter is trivial if it is not a critique of ideas and of human life. Mencken himself has an immeasurably better chance than Huneker to survive—firstly because the range of his interests is far wider than Huneker's was; and secondly because he has frankly attempted to settle certain issues and to praise and blame, thereby disregarding that fundamental precept of Huneker's which he once applauded and often professed to obey.

These, precisely, were Huneker's deficiencies, and they were lethal. A critic must have knowledge: his was vast—in the seven arts, but pitifully small in other respects. A critic must be an analyst, an interpreter, and a judge; Huneker was an impressionist. This means, as he himself explained with admirable clarity, that the critic attempts to settle nothing, nor to praise nor blame, but simply "to spill his own soul" and "humbly to follow and register his emotions aroused by a masterpiece." Well, whatever else he may do, the critic who subscribes to those postulates will succeed chiefly in portraying himself. And that, of course, is just what Huneker succeeded in doing. The portrait was charming and likable, but it was not criticism.

Indeed, no one of the new critics of that period wrote what we, let alone the future, can seriously regard as criticism. Percival Pollard, for example, is less than a name today, and there is no possibility of resuscitation. He was a strongly individual, robustly talented, and liberated person, and though he lacked Huneker's originality and wit, he was a more vigorous and masculine writer. But what remains of all his gusto? Who reads now his "Masks and Minstrels of New Germany" and "Their Day in Court?" The former, especially, was in its time an exuberant and amusing work. Unfortunately, both are romantic, epicurean, and impressionistic, and neither has anything in it more lasting than the esthetic fashions of their day.

THE OPERA WHEN HUNEKER WAS A MUSIC CRITIC—Painting by Mary Cassatt (Courtesy Whitney Museum)

And Peck—his literary oblivion is quite complete. A professor of Greek and Latin at Columbia University, he was engaged, aside from his classical studies, in liberalizing and broadening American critical methods and in making contemporary European letters known to American scholars—which is to say that he was doing a job in the academic sphere equivalent to Huneker's in the journalistic. It need hardly be added that he was not the Bolshevik his enemies accused him of being. Though he wrote of contemporaries and foreigners with few lingering traces of the genteel heritage, when such national holy ones as Emerson and Longfellow were under consideration he reverted to type and was just a professor of the year 1900. But he did shock the pedants into looking around at what was actually going on in the world and he did introduce into official criticism a pinch of moral tolerance. And what of it? A few historians will remember him gratefully and nobody will read him. He was a stimulating but minor figure even in those days and nothing he wrote was inspiring for more than a moment only. His audience was continually outstripping him, and that was his tragedy. His timidity and caution made him an inadequate spokesman for the one class who could have given him a permanent symbolic significance. It was Huneker who succeeded.

For it is obvious that men of letters are sometimes elected to historical importance without reference to the intrinsic worth of their compositions. It is likely that when Johnson's works are no longer read, he will be talked and written about and will represent something concrete and meaningful. He was a type, a perfect and complete expression of an age. So, too, was James Huneker. In both the man and the writer — in his cosmopolitanism, his sensuality, his indifference to the Puritan virtues, his contempt for the Victorian esthetic, and his grim, inflexible individualism—the recent bourgeoisie of the cities might find a delightful reflection of their profoundest impulses. Remaining always several steps ahead of the community that bred him, he was seldom in advance of, or superior to, its aspirations or even its latent reflexes. It was this class that came to dominate American life immediately after the World War. Those were the years of its plenty. It set the whole tone of the decade in the arts and professions, in social behavior, manners, and politics. And James Huneker's mind, his soul if you will, was the dream of that class incarnate, and indeed it was his friends, his disciples and pupils, who ruled the roost throughout the twenties. He is a shadow while his followers are canonized, yet it was he who did the spade-work and bequeathed the style and the point of view which were later made popular by a dozen journalists. He was a man, said Van Wyck Brooks, of the tribe. Therein, entirely, lies his importance.

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Bernard Smith, of the staff of Alfred A. Knopf, is completing a history of American criticism.

Grateful Hound

By WILLARD MAAS

THOUGH beauty be the minister
Of her white body bent fern-wise,
My mouth rebukes the sinister
Sweet light that curls within her eyes.

For she has bound me with a cord,
Silver as air but strong as weed.
Her least desire and every word
Is bitter food for the dark blood's need.

Chrysanthemums of snow, her breasts
Cupped by hands are wild as a dove.
This flesh before her own attests
The ancient miracle of love.

And if I run before her sight,
Hiding my heart in a dripping cave,
With the moon-white coming of evening's light
I shall return her loyal slave.

And scarlet-headed the sun will lift
A dewey crown over the hill,
Letting the morning's gold hair drift
Over the edge of her window-sill.

Where she lies sleeping, quiet as a leaf
Blown from autumn to winter's ground,
While close beside her rests my grief
Gnawing its bone, a grateful hound.

Cavalcade

BEGINNING THE TWENTIETH CENTURY: A History of the Generation that Made the War. By Joseph Ward Swain. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1933. $4.75.

Reviewed by SIDNEY B. FAY

ANY age is reflected in its leaders. The leaders reflect the ideas and environment of their youth. Accordingly Professor Swain, in his excellent account of the origins, progress, and settlement of the World War, sketches in an introductory chapter the conditions of the second half of the nineteenth century under which the statesmen, writers, and people of 1914 grew to manhood. He aims to give the history of the generation of men who made the war—a "Cavalcade" produced by a professional historian instead of by Hollywood.

Following the introductory chapter, Part I describes effectively the domestic development of the eight chief countries from about 1890 to 1914. It was in this domestic field that the men who made the war achieved their great triumphs in industry, science, and all that was optimistically hailed as "progress." In Part II comes the sad story of their international relations. Their sincere efforts to create a peaceful world community were more than offset by the counter-factors of increasing nationalism, militarism, economic imperialism, and mutual fears and suspicions, which resulted in the international anarchy of 1914.

Professor Swain rightly shows the constant interplay of domestic politics and

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foreign relations, most notable in the case of England and France. He thereby gives a fairer and truer picture of those men who strove for peace and yet brought on the most terrible of wars. And in the crisis of July, 1914, he "makes clear how unjust it is to stand over them [the diplomats] with a stop-watch, compelling them to account for every move, and assuming that when shown new telegrams they at once understood them in all their bearings as fully as do modern scholars with all the advantages of hindsight and after years of study."

In Part III comes a clear account of the military and diplomatic history of the war, with emphasis on the opening and closing campaigns and the effects of the Russian Revolution and American participation. This is followed by a severe analysis of the Peace Settlement and some features of the subsequent liquidations of the war during the past decade.

Though the volume might well be used as a textbook, it is fortunately free from the wooden formality and excess of factual detail often found in textbooks. The author's grasp is broad and somewhat philosophic. His point of view is that of a liberal of the Left. On the question of war responsibility he is a revisionist. His style is clear and vigorous, and not lacking in occasional sardonic humor. After a shrewd analysis of the Emperor William's character and a comment on his famous hunting parties, he adds: "In his forty-third year the Kaiser was able to have inscribed in letters of gold upon a block of granite the words: 'Here His Majesty William II brought down His Most High's fifty thousandth animal, a white cock-pheasant.' This is indeed a record which even so mighty a hunter before the Lord as the late President Roosevelt could hardly have bettered."

Excellent maps and a selective bibliography add to the book's other attractive qualities.

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Sidney Bradshaw Fay, professor of history at Harvard University, is the author of "Origins of the World War," one of the most authoritative studies in its field.

Footlight Frenzy

(*Continued from first page*)

uine feeling leaves off and the histrionic impulse begins. And Eugene, the actor, explaining to Owen, the playwright, the agony in his heart—with ample embroidery—while Owen is trying to get some revisions done on the play, may serve as merely one illustration of the entertainment in this book:

> That's the one thing I could never forgive a woman [cries Eugene]—never! That she'd ruin the career of the man she loves! God, what irony—to be ruined by a woman's loving you! I'm at my wit's end, I tell you! She harries me without rest. You can't care for a woman as I did for Isabelle, so long and devotedly. [*Oh yeah! Reviever*], without its becoming an attachment. Of course I'm attached to her! I may not be in love with her any more, but I can't help being attached to her, can I? She can't be in anguish without that's agonizing me, you see. Yes, and she counts on it. Every instant I'm with her she suffers at me incessantly!

Tarkington has a nice satirical touch, and yet he manages to make his whole cast of characters both enjoyable and agreeable. No, this is decidedly not the Great Novel of the American Theatre; but it is an exceptionally shrewd side-glance at theatrical life, wherein the preposterous usually happens.

According to the London *Observer*, the Browning manuscripts which have come into possession of the British Museum, including that of "The Ring and the Book," show that Browning wished to call the poem "The Franceschini," thinking the other "too pretty-fairy-story-like." "That is true enough," says the *Observer*, "but the alternative title would have been very nearly the worst in literature. Readers would not have understood it, could not have pronounced it, and would have resented it anyhow. Of our own time I should say the worst title is the one which Lady Frances Balfour put to her volume of reminiscences, 'Ne Obliviscaris.'"

A Fragment of Medievalism

TWENTY YEARS A-GROWING. By Maurice O'Sullivan. Translated by Moya Llewelyn Davis and George Thomson. New York: The Viking Press.* 1933. $2.50.

Reviewed by PADRAIC COLUM

THIS book, which has no plot, no psychological analysis, no progression, may appear monotonous to certain readers, but to others it will be welcome just because of these lacks. It is a book which has the poetry, humor, high spirits, of a lively, good-hearted, and, so far as poetry and story-telling go, a cultivated people. And it has something else besides these qualities. Surprisingly it reproduces the style and idiom of Irish literature of eight or nine hundred years ago—the swift and humorous impressionism which makes certain of the early Irish stories so living when compared with other medieval literary creations. The scene is the Blasket Islands off the coast of Kerry, where about two hundred people, speaking Irish and carrying on the tradition of seventeenth century Ireland, that is to say, the tradition of fifteenth century Europe, live without shops or markets, and are born and go to their graves without seeing a building more than one story high.

To live with these islanders, using their speech and following their avocations, is to go back to that imagination, faith, and humor out of which modern art and philosophy have come. Thus when the boy, reared on the mainland, arrives on his father's island, we have this:

> And now the men had the curragh on their backs and were putting her on the stays. I was standing on the top of the slip, a little afraid, for before me was a stout little lad as plump as a young pig. He kept staring at me out of his big blue eyes, his nose dripping, his finger in his mouth and he chewing it. He looked at my head and then at my feet. Then he moved round to examine me behind. I could feel his warm breath at the back of my neck. . . . The house put great wonder on me. I had never seen the like of it before. It was small and narrow, with a felt roof, the walls outside bright with lime, a fine glowing fire sending warmth into every corner, and four sugan chairs around the hearth. I sat down on one of them. A dog was lying in the cinders. When I patted him with my hand he leapt up with a growl, drew his tail between his legs, and slunk away into the corner.

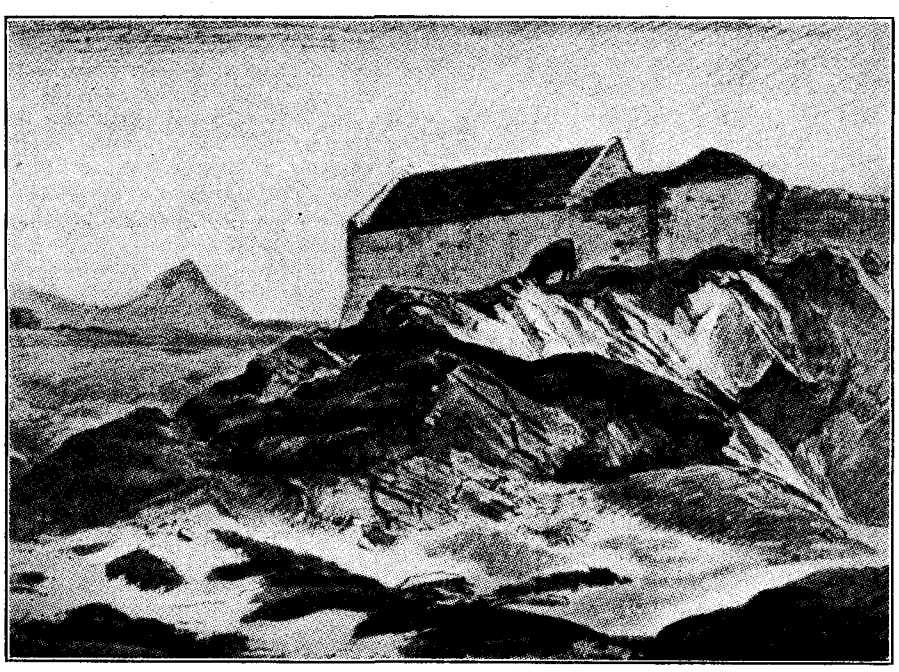
Then there is the day's hunting on a deserted island. The bands in the Ossianic lays and stories hunted the great Irish deer, and Maurice O'Sullivan and his companions hunt rabbits and sea birds, but for all that difference something of that early world comes into this history of their day's adventures. Perhaps some time this young writer who has such access to the ancient sources, such feeling for youthful companionship and the sights and sounds of nature as felt by the actively occupied but poetically-minded man will give us a modernization of the Ossianic cycles of stories and poems:

> We started out to draw the traps. The moon was moving slowly among the stars and throwing a silver glitter on the sea through the Bay of Dingle to the east, bright points of light in the dew which lay heavy on the grass, a dead calm on the sea and not a breath from the sky, grass and fern up to our knees and a sound like a whirlwind sweeping through the fern from the rabbits running through it with the dogs pursuing them; an odd cry from the heron with the fairness of the night; the petrel with her own song; coch-coch-coch! from the black-backed gull across the island to the north; meggy-geg-geg! from the goats; baa-baa from a sheep in the distance; and the seal not forgetting his own olagon in the gullies far below.

Dr. Robin Flower, the curator of Irish manuscripts in the British Museum, who has a residence on the Blaskets, has collected the folk-lore of the island, of which Aristotle is the hero—how very medieval this is! But this community, though very isolated (they make their voyage to the mainland of Kerry on canvases stretched on frames, the curraghs which are the successors of the hide-covered frames of the early navigators) are not unvisited in our times. Partly for the sake of their Irish, which is copious and vigorous, and partly for the sake of sharing in a life which seems heroic and idyllic, many visitors have come amongst them. Without these visitors we should not, I believe, have had a book like this of Maurice O'Sullivan's, or another book which was published in Irish a few years ago, written by a man of an elder generation, "The Islanders." It took these comings and goings to give the community a consciousness. Their daily speech acquired a prestige in their minds which Irish has not in other parts of the Gaelteacht—to the Blasket Islanders Irish is a language which absorbs the attention of people who, to them, are princes and philosophers. I remember Professor Marstrander, a Celtic scholar from Norway, returning to Dublin after sojourning in the Blaskets. John Synge went there and made a poem, "Beg-inish," which has the holiday side of the islander's life in it:

> Bring Kateen Beg and Maurwa Jude
> To dance in Beg-inish,
> And when the boys—they're in Dunquin—
> Have sold their crabs and fish,
> Wave fawny shawls and call them in,
> And call the little girls who spin,
> And seven dancers from Dunquin
> To dance in Beg-inish.

Then Robin Flower, poet and scholar, became a citizen of the Blaskets, and Professor Thomson, a young Englishman who lectures in Irish on Plato in Galway College, came to perfect his Irish, and had young Maurice O'Sullivan to instruct him. These outsiders influenced the type of writing which the two island-penmen were to produce, for without that outside, critical, formative influence, no islander would write about his own works and days but about the heroes of his traditional romances.



ON THE IRISH COAST—Drawing by Randolph Schwabe (From "Artist's Country," Studio Publications)

The excellence of the translation of "Twenty Years A-Growing" should not be overlooked. Translation from Irish into English is singularly difficult for the reason that Irish is an unsophisticated and English is a sophisticated language, that modern Irish is an unwritten and English is an over-written language. To get the spirit of this countryside, oral, *terre-à-terre* speech into English, or indeed into any of the metropolitan languages of today, is a feat which demands not only great skill in the handling of English, but an exceptional literary tact: there is a temptation to be affected, to copy the rhythm of Anglo-Irish speech and so produce an idiom which reads like a parody of Synge or Lady Gregory and which is fundamentally unreal. Then, too, Irish is full of expressions which seem far-fetched and poetical when turned into English—"The Children of the Mist," "The Sky-woman," "My Star of Knowledge"—I come on these three in a short passage of translation. They are purely conventional and mean no more than "the people living on the top of the mountain," "the handsome woman," "my wise and pretty girl," but they are featured in the translation as if they were inventions of a poet. Irish, in point of fact, is not a more poetical language than English, but, on a certain level, it is a more actual language—it is a language dealing immediately with fields and tools, with flocks and herds, with house and hearth, with fundamental feelings, a language which sounds out of place in the streets, and which has belonged to soldiers, herdsmen, and to poets who have never seen a verse of theirs in print. If I were directing translations from Irish into English I would forbid access to Synge and Lady Gregory, and even to Douglas Hyde, and I would have the translators read the English of Standish Hayes O'Grady's "Sylva Gadelica," or Campbell's translations of the Irish stories which were taken over to Scotland and which were told there in a seventeenth-century Irish idiom—the "Tales of the Western Highlands."

This is a very long diversion, but it is to state a fact which helps enormously to the success of a book written by a non-professional writer—the fact that the translation is almost ideal, that it conveys a sense of Irish speech without any tricks or affectations being made use of, that it is at once racy and restrained. "Twenty Years A-Growing" gives us from the inside the life of a community which is still medieval in its culture, which is, indeed, the last fragment of the medieval world left in Europe today.

It is completely objective, and the only continuity it has is through one day of a man's life following another. Any chapter can be read as a separate narrative. But the whole is held up by an unflagging interest and delight in the world. It is authentic *seancus*—the talk around the evening fire when marvels are related and memories evoked and personalities dramatized, and the day's work takes on some light of romance. It is the story-telling of a people who can make any event of their daily life dramatic or humorous, and the talk of a people who, more than any other in Europe, have perfected the art of talking, a people who have kept from generation to generation, without ever having seen them in book or manuscript, the poems of Egan O'Rahilly and Brian Merriman, poems which in artistry and elaboration surpass the most rhymed and chimed of Swinburne's verses.

❧ ❧

Padraic Colum, an Irishman by birth though now for much of every year a resident of America, is, in addition to being a poet and novelist, a student of folk-lore. Among his recent books is "Orpheus—Stories from the Mythologies of the World."

M. François Mauriac, the French poet and novelist whose "Vipers' Tangle" has just appeared in this country, has been elected a member of the French Academy. He was born in Bordeaux in 1885. His first volume of verse appeared in 1910 and his first novel in 1913.

* A review of this book, written from the Gaelic original, appeared on the Foreign Literature page of the *Saturday Review* of July 8.

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The Saturday Review
of LITERATURE

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Art and Politics

The whole cloudy quarrel over "Is Politics Ruining Art?" comes to nothing in the August issue of *The Forum*, mainly because the man chosen to present the affirmative, Mr. Joseph Wood Krutch, has the very devil of a time discovering instances to fit into his hypothetical frame of reference. To judge by the tone of his argument, Mr. Krutch thinks that politics is ruining some artists, and that some critics would have artists desert their art wholly and unconditionally to run for Congress, distribute propaganda, mount the barricades, picket for strikers, create slogans, write manifestoes, lecture on sociology, and become ambassadors for this, that, or the other 'ism. Edmund Wilson, who defends the negative, accuses Mr. Krutch of "politicophobia," and it is hard to see why Mr. Wilson is not right.

Mr. Krutch quotes an anonymous Columbia professor as saying "this is no time" for "mere speculation." For our own part, this seems like a very weak reed indeed for Mr. Krutch to lean upon. If the Columbia professor had in mind a total view of the universe, and man's relation to it, "mere speculation," divorced from human needs and desires, has never been enough, and Mr. Krutch has recognized as much in "Experience and Art." Problems of politics interested Plato, because they went to make up one element in a total view. The medieval schoolmen were careful to make provision for the question of usury in their philosophical edifices. If Mr. Krutch would define what he means by "mere speculation," we might get somewhere, but the phrase, standing stripped and bare to the winds of doctrine, simply conveys nothing at all.

Let us test Mr. Krutch's fears by reference to actualities. While Edmund Wilson has been concerned with Marx, the Kentucky miners, and French novelists who happen to be interested in politics, he has also been writing a play. We haven't seen the manuscript of the play, but no one is fit to pass judgment on what politics has done to Mr. Wilson's art until he has compared it with Mr. Wilson's earlier play, "The Crime in the Whistler Room." An active interest in the problem of farming in the depression did not prevent Malcolm Cowley from writing an understanding review of "The Fountain," surely a work that is as far away from politics as Mr. Krutch himself would evidently like to be. We cannot tell what politics has done to the art of Mr. Dreiser until we see "The Stoic," the third panel of the "trilogy of desire" which commenced with "The Financier." If "The Stoic" is any worse than "The 'Genius,'" Mr. Dreiser's story of a more or less "pure" artist, we will be willing to grant Mr. Krutch his fears. But Mr. Dreiser will have to fall far to back up Mr. Krutch.

What has politics done to Sinclair Lewis? To Joseph Hergesheimer? To any and all the novelists of the so-called "middle generation?" So far as we know, these men haven't had the slightest interest in politics. Yet by common consent most of them have run down hill since the middle 'twenties. This may prove nothing at all, or it may prove that an active interest in the fate of the country might have provided these novelists with an impetus, a working direction, a moving center, capable both of renewing their energies and bringing them face to face with the experience of life that is artistic material. Mr. Krutch might retort that Sherwood Anderson's "labor" novel, "Beyond Desire," is pretty bad. But some of Mr. Anderson's "pure" art products are also pretty bad. We get nowhere by arguments of this sort; they are beyond science, for artists are seemingly never born as identical twins, and hence we have no "controls" by which to check our figures.

To come down to cases, what is Mr. Krutch's pother all about? We know that Lenin enjoyed Dostoievsky, that Marx read Shakespeare, and that James A. Garfield was much impressed by "Ben Hur." We know that Herbert Hoover wanted a "great poem" written to defeat the depression, and that the Empress Eugénie was a friend of Merimée's. These politicians differed in tastes, but they would probably, one and all, have stepped on art equally hard had it stood in their paths to power. That is the privilege (provided they can get away with it) of those who prefer power to esthetic enjoyment. It is up to artists to fight this state of mind. But this has nothing whatever to do with the effect of an interest in politics on an artist's mind.

And the final retort of Mr. Krutch to Mr. Wilson is about as convincing as a love scene in a musical comedy. Mr. Krutch brings up his heavy artillery; he has found "a brilliant and learned writer" who is intolerant, who would send all "bourgeois" art to the pyre and all "bourgeois" writers to the stake. The "brilliant and learned writer" is no doubt all the adjectives imply, being no less than Robert Briffault. But Mr. Briffault happens to be—an anthropologist. Since when have anthropologists necessarily had a fond place in their hearts for pure art? We communed with the ghost of William Graham Sumner last night, and got absolute silence for an answer.

As predicted in *The Saturday Review* for April 22, Edgar Ansell Mowrer, whose "Germany Puts Back the Clock" was offensive to the Hitlerites, has been forced out as President of the Berlin Foreign Press Association. When Hitler suggested last spring that he step down, Mr. Mowrer refused. The Nazis then resorted to the "hostage" game, releasing their prisoner when Mr. Mowrer finally complied with Hitler's desires. But Mr. Mowrer gets the last word. Even before his resignation, he had been offered and had accepted a job as Far Eastern correspondent for *The Chicago Daily News*. He thus leaves Berlin with the knowledge that he has freed a friend from persecution, when he might have left, in the course of events, with no such pleasant period to the unpleasant interlude caused by speaking his mind.

The Saturday Review recommends

This Group of Current Books:

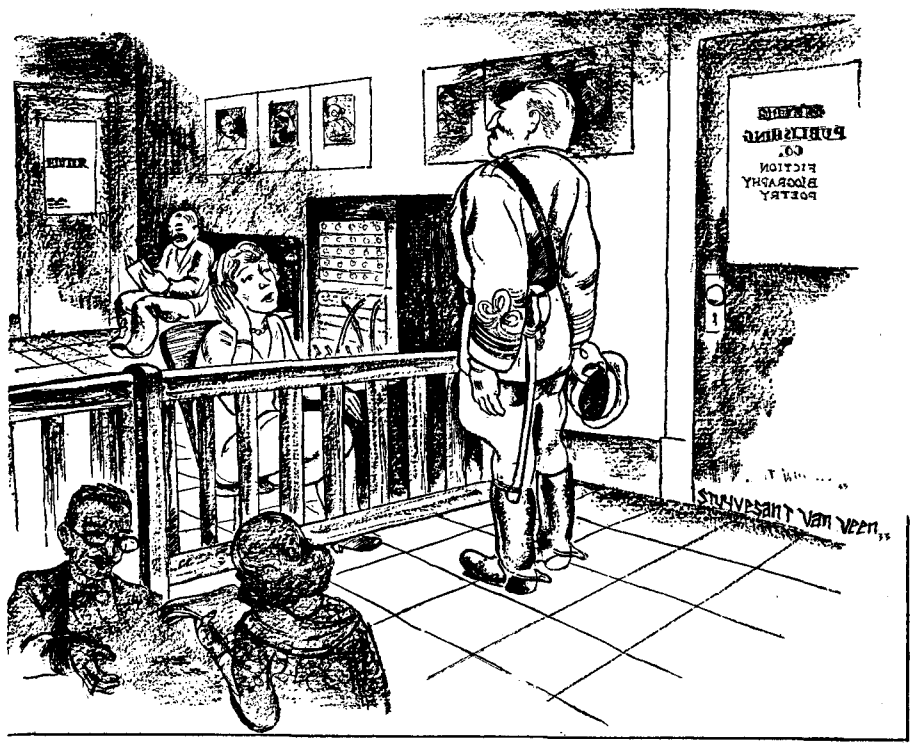
THE FARM. By LOUIS BROMFIELD. *Harpers.* A segment of the American background.

PRESENTING LILY MARS. By BOOTH TARKINGTON. *Doubleday, Doran.* In which Mr. Tarkington returns to the theatre.

THE CRIME OF CUBA. By CARLETON BEALS. *Lippincott.* An exposition of one side of the Cuban question.

This Less Recent Book:

SHERMAN, FIGHTING PROPHET. LLOYD LEWIS. *Harcourt, Brace.* A biography which parallels in part the scene and background of "The Farm."



"SORRY GENERAL, BUT YOUR GHOST WRITER WILL BE BUSY FOR ANOTHER TEN MINUTES"

To the Editor: *Teaching, an Art Or a Science?*

Eggs and Untruths

Sir: In the issue of July 1 you published an admirable column on two addled eggs recently hatched by Teachers College of Columbia. The writer was severe, speaking of the "sheer nonsense" of Dr. Briggs's egg and the "sheer sophistry" of Dr. Rugg's egg. His severity was more than justified; for unless our critical journals talk plainly about the comical folly which is poured out by professors of pedagogy, their artless flood of unreason will continue to swamp all the common sense that tries to operate in American schools.

Was it generosity or ignorance that prompted the reviewer to say that Teachers College sends out its graduates equipped with "a knowledge of the technique of teaching"? It does no such thing. It does not even pretend to such an achievement. If it could impart skill in teaching, it would be a blessed institution which would have to be forgiven for hatching goose-eggs. The reviewer ought to do penance for his untruth by reading the "Report of the Committee on College and University Teaching," a bulletin of the American Association of University Professors published last May. The Committee had to be very guarded and polite, but candor compelled them to print this understatement of a gruesome truth on page 64: "If undergraduates in American universities and colleges would everywhere point to their courses in departments . . . of education as good examples of what the instruction in other departments ought to be, there would be no difficulty in bringing academic minds to a new orientation. But that is not what usually happens. On the contrary, there are many institutions in which the students are inclined to single out the courses in education as examples of what good instruction ought *not* to be." The Committee puts the question: "Why don't the educationists show us by example, as well as by precept, the way to teach effectively?" The Committee gives the answer that is made *by the educationists themselves:* "Professors in departments and schools of education are concerned, and ought to be concerned, with the investigation of educational problems rather than with the demonstration of teaching methods."

HENSHAW WARD.

West Boothbay Harbor, Maine.

Fiend or Friend?

Sir: Max Eastman in a recent review of "The Secret of Laughter" quotes from the author, A. M. Ludovici: ". . . animals show teeth, that is to say, they make a deliberate display of teeth, only when they wish to warn a fellow, a foe, a man, of the danger of pursuing certain tactics too far." Eastman calls this a "lop-sided" assumption. I believe Eastman is right, but he does not, apparently, have the data from a scientifically conducted experiment to back up his belief.

I recommend, therefore, that Messrs. Ludovici and Eastman get acquainted with a Cairn terrier, house-broken, happy, and not afraid to demonstrate his emotions. Both men will observe that when returning to renew acquaintance with the Cairn after a period of separation, the Cairn will exhibit his emotion of joy by *smiling*, as well as by performing a multitude of perceptible physiological movements. I have never seen collies, German shepherds, Newfoundlands, cocker spaniels, French poodles, or any other dog perform this fiendish act. I strongly suspect that only certain members of the terrier family can smile; I strongly suspect that a terrier's mouth is the only canine one "built" to smile.

In short, I don't know, and would be very interested to discover whether our jolly little Cairn terrier is fiend or friend. We cannot, in the future, live in ignorance and be happy.

EDWARD A. NOYES.

New York City.

The Feminist Bible

Sir: A distinguished literary committee selected a list of the hundred best books of the century written by American women. An international Woman Writers Conclave held in connection with the International Congress of Women in Chicago accepted and broadcast the list. Without wishing to criticize the official list, I cannot suppress astonishment that Charlotte Perkins Gilman's books have been entirely ignored. Particularly her "Women and Economics," which has been considered by feminists of the whole world as the outstanding book on Feminism. It has been accepted all over the world as a standard work on the movement. Even Olive Schreiner's "Women and Labor" did not dethrone it. "Women and Economics" has been translated into many languages and has not been surpassed by any newer work in this line. Feminists in other countries must certainly be astonished that the most important feminist writer is ignored in her own country.

ROSIKA SCHWIMMER.

New York City.

Cue Ball's Past

Sir: Jeff Miller's accounts of "Cue Ball" Hennessey, with samples of his poetry, in recent issues of the *Review*, took me back to precious days at the old Buckhorn Saloon in San Antonio. Undoubtedly "Cue Ball" is the same Hennessey who long ago sat in the Buckhorn, offering to exchange "an original, epigrammatic quatrain, to suit your individual case, sir, for a drink of whiskey." I still recall the parody he recited for me. I had asked for something "summarizing your own philosophy of life, if you please." He immediately recited the first of the following four lines, and, after a brief pause, added the other three.

Lives of great men oft remind us
Be we great or fools sublime,
All, in parting, leave behind us
Sandprints on the feet of time.

In San Antonio, we called him "Three Star."

HARRY G. CAMBERT.

Bristow, Okla.

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Baudelaire Up to Date?

BAUDELAIRE. By Enid Starkie. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1933. $3.75.

Reviewed by ERNEST BOYD

BAUDELAIRE died in 1867; in 1869 his closest friend, Charles Asselineau, published the first book about him. That same year there was an article on him in *The Atlantic Monthly* and another in *Fraser's Magazine*. In 1875 George Saintsbury published his, since reprinted, essay in *The Fortnightly Review*. Ever since, the stream of commentary, of critical and biographical studies, has not ceased. Now comes Miss Starkie's book, which has been hailed by Sir J. C. Squire and other English critics in those terms of superlative praise which are rendering most English reviewing valueless. In her strictly selected bibliography Miss Starkie admits that the literature on Baudelaire is voluminous, but dismisses most of it as useless. But those who have read the sources which she does cite might easily retort that her book is equally useless, in that all she has to say has already been said by the authors mentioned in her bibliography.

Miss Enid Starkie is lecturer in French literature at the University of Oxford, which may account for both the merits and defects of this study of Baudelaire. In the standard manuals of French literature this poet has received preposterous treatment. Faguet and Doumic ignore him completely, Brunetière briefly denounces him as worthless, while Lanson with equal brevity contrives to misrepresent him fantastically. As these manuals have provided the literary dogmas for millions of French and foreign students of French literature, Miss Starkie may well have come to the conclusion that a vast ignorance, due to M. Faguet, Brunetière, and Doumic, prevailed amongst readers of modern French poetry. For all I know, she may be right, since the compilers of foreign manuals in this field tend usually to echo their more orthodox French colleagues. In that case, I think, she would have been better advised to rewrite the offending manuals, whose incredible omissions are not confined to Baudelaire, and supply their deficiencies.

As it is, she has clearly addressed her book to that part of the general public which is familiar with the works of Baudelaire. Is it possible that such people have not also been interested in his biographers and commentators, in his moving correspondence? Since Miss Starkie has diligently and laboriously summarized from those sources, her book has little original value, except in so far as it brings between two covers, in a more or less consecutive narrative, what we have learned in various volumes elsewhere. Such a compendium undoubtedly has its uses—it is certainly the longest book on Baudelaire extant—but whether it is thereby entitled to the claims made for it in London remains to be seen. I have a suspicion that, had an American publisher issued it, as the work of an instructor in French literature at Harvard, it would have either been ridiculed, or disposed of in one of the shorter notices in the *Times Literary Supplement*, as a competent piece of Germano-American research.

Two things that make the book exasperating reading are that Miss Starkie has no literary style and that she feels obliged to defend Baudelaire at every turn from charges which have long since been exploded or forgotten. She still labors under the illusion that the attacks of Sherer and Brunetière, the prejudices of Faguet and Doumic, are the current coin of Baudelairian criticism. If anything, the exact opposite is the case. His poetic achievements have been vastly over-rated in recent years, his eccentricities have been gently enveloped in a haze of psychoanalysis, eminent professors have demonstrated his Catholic piety, and he has been made the subject of a volume by Stanislas Fumet in the *Roseau d'Or* series, whose chief ornaments are Henri Massis and our neo-Thomistic friend, Jacques Maritain. Its title "Notre Baudelaire" is tantamount to a declaration that Baudelaire is now one of the elect of the Catholic Right. Baron Ernest Seillière—whose name is misspelt in Miss Starkie's bibliography—in his recent and interesting study of the poet has tried to inject a critical note into this process of canonization.

This work of superogation is not improved by Miss Starkie's style, which is humdrum and curiously ill-adapted to many of the problems and situations which she has to discuss—or thinks she has to. One is reminded irresistibly of maiden ladies of another era trying to prove themselves equal to any occasion by a timid boldness based on obvious inexperience. Baudelaire's life was far from exemplary; his sexual and other habits were as abnormal as Verlaine's. Miss Starkie attempts, not only to paint the "lilies and raptures of vice," but to paint the "Flowers of Evil" themselves by accusing the prosecutor of the book of reading into one particular poem what is palpably and obviously there. She is as determined as any doting aunt to find excuses for her beloved nephew. No matter what he does, she finds excuses for it; she can see too much to be said on both sides of any question his conduct raises. With the result that she is found justifying, or pleading extenuating circumstances, in favor of aberrations from which the whole tone of the book would make us expect her to shrink in horror.

So anxious is she to make her story one of sweetness and light that, in the end, everybody is whitewashed. Baudelaire's hated stepfather was a fine, tenderhearted, kindly disciplinarian, who really liked Charles and was proud of him. Old Ancelle, the family lawyer, who did so much to thwart the whole course of Baudelaire's life, turns out to be just a dear old man, the consolation of the poet's declining years. Yet, when one has separated the story of Baudelaire's life from Miss

BAUDELAIRE AT 23
By Deroy

Starkie's too insistent comment of sweet reasonableness, what stands out is the miserable tragedy with which we have long been familiar. The gay and brilliant beginnings of a dandy, wit, and master of beautiful words, his scrupulous incapacity to turn out slipshod work, his early infection by the disease which killed him, his lifelong struggle with poverty and debts—debts incurred in his early twenties, which might easily have been wiped out by a sensible use of his family resources. An end somewhat similar to that of Maupassant, also the spoiled darling of a mother who could give him everything but what such men really need. Apart from translations, all that remains is half a dozen volumes testifying to the diversity and independence of his tastes and the perspicacity of his vision. He wrote some beautiful poems, but there are not enough of them to constitute him a great poet.

* *

Ernest Boyd, who has served as a journalist in both Ireland and America, is a critic and editorial adviser who has translated much from the French and German, and written constantly on the literatures of those countries.

Two important Shakespeare manuscripts, known as the "Disputed Revels Accounts," have been officially declared to be genuine by the Public Records Office, says *John O'London's* Weekly. "They record payments for the performances of various plays before King James's Court at Whitehall in the winter seasons of 1604-5 and 1611-12. Some of the plays are by 'Shaxberd'—merely an erratic spelling of Shakespeare's name—and include 'The Plaie of Errors' and 'Mesur for Mesur.'"

Mr. Beer's Character Parts

MRS. EGG AND OTHER BARBARIANS. By Thomas Beer. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1933. $2.50.

Reviewed by JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

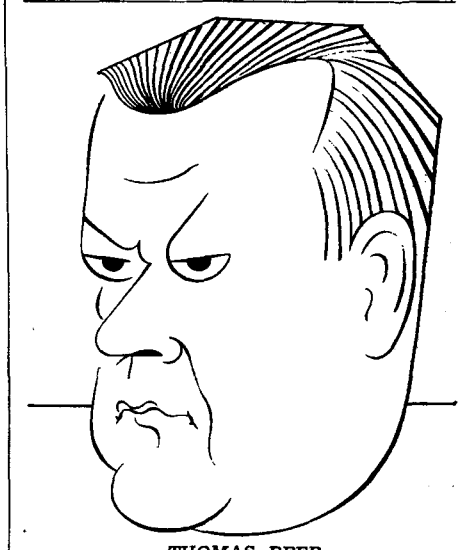
THOMAS BEER has a remarkable eye for many-colored blooms of personality, originality, excellence, and character that is beyond other American satirists. Although he was graduated from Yale at the end of the 1900's—the "decade of muck," as he has christened it—his schooling and his heart have always been with the 'nineties. While others were watching the débâcle of American magazine illustration through Leyendecker to Haskell Coffin, Thomas Beer was feasting on the excellent line-drawings in *Scribner's* and the old *Century*. While others were battening on the slick fiction of *McClure's* and *Everybody's* (so far behind the economic and political articles in quality), Beer was forming himself on the stories of Stephen Crane and the early Hamlin Garland. And while the Hamilton Wright Mabies were capturing the public fancy as critics and leaders of cultural opinion, this early apostate from sweetness and light was dipping into the more intelligent critical ramblings of the then discredited Harry Thurston Peck. The 'nineties, as Beer has observed, constituted a period of "primary sophistication" in American letters, and he turned to this period from the cultural desert of 1910 with the tongue of a camel arrived at last in an oasis.

All this is rather a long preamble to the eight short stories collected in "Mrs. Egg and Other Barbarians." But it is necessary. For Beer prides himself on being a connoisseur of the unique and the distinguished, and his notions of these qualities were formed, not in the decade of his 'teens, but in the decade before. He has consistently lived into the past, soaking up curious lore about all sorts of people. He came to admire Crane, because that *enfant terrible* looked upon contemporary society with the disabused eye of an anthropologist inspecting Neolithic cave drawings. He came to admire the keeper of McKinley's political destinies, Mark Hanna, because that realist did not talk two languages, one for the politicians on the inside, and another for the electorate which was to be manipulated. Hanna's excellence, in Beer's eyes, resided in his open practice of what campaign managers before him had done in secret shame. Hanna was forthright. He "grinned." He was a character from a period of characters.

In other words, he was the sort of person who could only be emulated on the stage by some actor adept at the "character" role. Beer's art consists rather largely of the creation of character parts. The more important people in this collection of short stories—Mrs. Egg, the fat lady whose husband owns the second largest dairy farm in Ohio, and old Mr. Van Eck, a breeder of horses who lives within shooting distance of Saratoga in New York state—are character parts. It would take a sweeter Alison Skipworth, a less clownish Marie Dressler, a softened Lucille La Verne to create the role of Mrs. Egg on the stage. It would take a comic American analogue of the "Old English" of George Arliss's portrayal to create Van Eck. There would have to be plenty of salt, plenty of lustiness, plenty of lovable vulgarity. There would have to be witty mastery of the humor of deflation.

Mrs. Egg and old Van Eck are done in the "flat," as E. M. Forster would say. They are created by tagging them with peculiarities, such as Mrs. Egg's constant reaching for peppermints, her reiterated "My Gee," her "My lamb" when her gigantic son, Adam, puts in appearance. Old Van Eck is set before us in his continual concern for the growth of a sprig of demonstrable backbone in his son Lupus, and in his grandson, Carolus. It is a secret high day in his life when Carolus observes the family tradition by getting fired from high school.

Six of the stories in "Mrs. Egg" ran in *The Saturday Evening Post*. They are skilfully designed and rather subtle vehicles for the comedic actors. The two remaining "frivolous tales," as Mr. Beer calls them, are oblique treatments respectively of an off-center love affair in Mrs. Egg's Ilium, Ohio, and the death of a "liberal" politician who was, so far as Mr. Van Eck could make out, "liberal" only in the use of funds provided for him by women. "Obituary of a Liberal" celebrates the gigolo in politics; and Mr. Van Eck has unusual opportunity here to display his fine qualities of prejudice. They coincide with Mr. Beer's own, as do Mrs. Egg's



THOMAS BEER

pragmatic decisions in regard to the courting habits of her son. Mr. Beer, Mrs. Egg, and Mr. Van Eck have similar tolerance of those who offend the more inane folkways, and similar scorn for hypocrites. Add Machiavelli to the trio, and you would have the world's most stalwart quartet of realists.

"Mrs. Egg and Other Barbarians," if published in book form some four years ago, might have been plastered with the critical opprobrium of the "stark-and-simplers." For at a time when the Ernest Hemingways and the Morley Callaghans and the American Caravaners in general were dispensing with all adornment, with adjective, simile, and metaphor, Beer, in emulation of Crane, was busy perfecting all three. Now that the fury for telegraphic messages of prose is abating, the writing of "Mrs. Egg" should shine all the more for the use of color and image. The stories collected here will not compete with Maupassant, Henry James, *etcetera*, but to find these tolerable blooms in the weedy garden of George Horace Lorimer is productive both of esthetic pleasure and great admiration for Mr. Beer's statesmanship. If the "frivolous tales" are not bursting with the social criticism that was present in "The Mauve Decade," that only means that Beer has two barrels to his effective shot gun.

Avarice at Large

THE PROGRESS OF JULIUS. By Daphne du Maurier. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company. 1933. $2.50.

Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS

MISS DU MAURIER may be young, but she writes with the skilled smoothness of a veteran; if "The Progress of Julius" did not please this reviewer very much it is because of what she chose to do, not of any shortcoming in her way of doing it. Julius Lévy was born in Paris, in time to see the siege of 1870 as a boy—born of an Algerian Jewish father and a French mother. Once or twice, in his boyhood, Jewish mysticism and idealism almost gripped him; but always he fell back on the tenacious avarice of the French peasant, reinforced by a grim, triple-distilled possessiveness that might have come straight from the ancestral desert of the Hebrews. From an adolescence in Algiers graced by theft, fraud, and murder (always successful, and successful with little effort) he goes

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more rapidly than age would have rotted them anyway.

Not exactly pleasant reading, this tale; but one has almost ceased to hope for novels that can be read with any pleasure. Miss du Maurier depicts the scenes of Julius Lévy's life, she paints in all the minor characters, with an admirably sure touch; but in the heart of the book the bare bones of the structure show too clearly through the finished fabric. The plot is as schematic as a fugue; and Julius Lévy is only a Balzac exercise on a single trait, and that a singularly unpleasing one, a remorseless selfish possessiveness—such an exercise as it needs a Balzac to execute at all successfully. There may be such men, but it is almost impossible to make them plausible in the selected data of a novel. All the setting for the central figure carries its own conviction with it; but Julius Lévy himself is no more credible than Elmer Gantry.

A New Poet

ASSENT TO AUTUMN. By Leila Jones. Brattleboro, Vermont: The Stephen Daye Press. 1933. $1.25.

Reviewed by LOUIS UNTERMEYER

THIS is one of the most precise and distinctive first books of the last five or six years and its author, Leila Jones, is a poet who demands watching. Those who look to be startled by eccentricity of language, tricks of epithet, or oddities of form will be disappointed. Mrs. Jones employs the traditional measures and the unaffected phrase; she is, technically at least, an orthodox lyricist, almost a formalist. Her individuality lies in the unusual turns of her thought, in her combination of clarity and "difference," in the play of a serious but never sombre metaphysics. With this intellectual alertness there runs a straightforward emotional current, neither straining for sensation, nor falsely naive.

Technically the verse is admirable. Though a newcomer, Mrs. Jones has none of the marks of the amateur. Such poems as "Never the Heart," "Ship Trail," "This Hour," "Aftermath," "Assent to Autumn," "Infidel," and half a dozen others surprise us by their "fine excess." They suggest an incongruous but delicate mingling of Léonie Adams and Elinor Wylie. Witness the conclusion of the title poem:

. . . . Trees, then,
Shaken from their golden sleep to boughs
That rattle on the sky, roots that grope
Where the beetle digs his dark house,
Turn as the heart turns from an alien fire
To its own flame on the hearth unfurled—
To bird-call and blossom and emerald
Creeping like a stain, new green on a new
world.

Mrs. Jones's fine promise is not a passing note—not, as has been said of the average first volume of verse, "a promissory note that is never met." The poems published immediately after the appearance of her volume prove that. A group of four printed in the June-July *Voices*, a group entitled "White Magic and Grey," show the same excellences with an advance in craftsmanship. Mrs. Jones has the unusual faculty of translating an old theme into a fresh poem, making the familiar seem strange without distorting the picture, but merely shifting the angle of vision. "Unholy Garden" evokes the baleful magic of Circe by concentrating on the "sinister moth languid with feeding on the livid bud" and "polluted honey" and "the drowsy roots of a mandragora." The Annunciation is reverent as a Fra Angelico and yet completely individualized with the first phrase of the opening quatrain.

The sonnets are equally her own—especially the crisp "Platonic Reproof," the unpaired and probably autobiographical "Puritan Wife" and "Happy Role," the concise saga of haying in "Winter Gold"—and, in a lesser degree, the two poems to her music-making husband.

There are only a few flaws, a few early poems evidently added to swell the little book to its modest seventy pages. But, with the exception of four or five too facile lyrics, "Assent to Autumn" reveals not only a clear and definite poet but that rare phenomenon, a restrained and self-critical one.

Louis Bromfield

(*Continued from first page*)

ries they knew and the giant maples and oaks their people had planted and the churches in which they worshipped. They knew the changing face of the countryside and the character of the community and they contributed to it and their own characters were in turn moulded by it: they had their own sense of values, and though they were essentially provincial they were far more sophisticated than their more worldly descendants.

It was this provincialism that gave a dignity and significance to their lives and their actions. It developed an integrity of character that has all but disappeared, for their standards were not the shifting standards of the market place but the standards of conscience and custom. It developed a sense of values that could distinguish between the real and the pretentious, and a sense of responsibility to family traditions and to the community and to the land itself. There was a flavor to life and an excitement in living; life was varied and creative and significant because it dealt with fundamentals and was lived in the presence and discipline of nature and not in an artificial environment.

LOUIS BROMFIELD WITH HIS FAMILY

Heady with the wine of Jeffersonian romanticism, the Colonel had come into this Ohio wilderness to found a new Paradise, and he had all but succeeded. He had been, back in the Free State of Maryland, a man of wealth, and he brought with him his library and his great four poster and his rosewood cabinet. He brought with him something of the elegance and the graciousness of the eighteenth century, and much of its passion for equalitarianism and for nature. And in this lovely Ohio country of abounding fertility he had created the farm, and he had achieved a way of life that had in it something of the spaciousness and dignity of the tidewater plantation. But along with him there had come, from New England, Bentham the peddlar, symbol of a menacing money economy, who instead of trading for a living lived for trade. But for fifty years the Colonel held his own.

> On the eve of the Civil War the County was no longer the wilderness into which the Colonel had come full of impractical hopes. The forests had vanished and the Town sat surrounded by fertile cultivated fields. Some of the Colonel's democratic hopes were already withered or dead, but the Town still had none of the ugliness nor the corruption of the city. There were no peasants in the County; there were only farmers who lived well and sent into the world, families well-nourished to carry on the battles they had begun. The Town had not yet imposed itself upon the county; it was merely a market-place. There was not an absentee landlord in the County, nor any half-starved tenants settling upon land which grew poorer and poorer. The rewards, the prestige, the government were entirely in the hands of the farmer. He knew the full dignity which is the right of the man who produces.

But in the end the town triumphed, and with it the ideals of the New England peddlar. John Sherman lived in the town, and the Sherman house stood there, symbolic in its unmitigated ugliness, of the new order of things. What succeeded the simplicity and integrity of the farm was an exploitative industrial order that knew neither grace nor beauty nor leisure nor dignity, that was shoddy and pretentious and selfish and ruthless. As Mr. Bromfield describes the new order, his chronicle becomes deeply imbued with bitterness and disillusionment, for this town is the town so cruelly depicted in the "Green Bay Tree" and the "Good Woman." The decay of the farm on the middle border was a gradual process, and because it was gradual it lacked even that compensating dignity which came to the South with the catastrophe of Appomattox. Here was no death, but only a sordid disintegration.

But it would be misleading to represent "The Farm" as a tract in the literature of agrarian protest. Mr. Bromfield has a genius for narrative and for the creation of character, and he has here returned to the scenes and some of the characters of his first and richest book, "The Green Bay Tree." He has succeeded in investing the farm, and the men and women whose lives were conditioned by it, with fascination and he has supplied the narrative with a wealth of incident and of character that might well supply material for half a dozen novels. It is indeed a varied and fabulous pageant that Mr. Bromfield leads before us. There is the Colonel, romanticist and pioneer, who worshipped both nature and reason and married a vain, frivolous, plump little wench and begot children until he was seventy. There is the magnificent Jamie Ferguson who had the most exciting adventures in Panama and California and worked his way back across most of the United States to marry one of the Colonel's daughters and settle down to cultivate and cherish the farm. There is grandmother Maria, fragile and elegant, who dominated the great household at the farm, an imperious old lady dressed always in black who stole cookies and pies out of the buttery for her numerous grandchildren. There is old Jorge van Essen whose wenching was punctuated by spasms of religion and whose twelve children populated half the Western Reserve. There is the Old Man, terrible and mysterious, who appeared out of nowhere and settled down with Johnnie's parents, a philosopher and a misanthrope who cast a spell over the household, and spent his last years tracing out a philosophy with his spidery handwriting and munching apples in his room.

Scores of others troop across these crowded pages: big strapping Martha who whisked the fugitive slaves from under the very eyes of the slave-hunters and who had her neck broken while breaking in a fractious colt; Greataunt Jane who married the mysterious Dr. Trefusis and went to live in the Gothic monstrosity across the tracks, and for twenty years never exchanged a word with her husband; rich old Aunt Sapphira, dressed always in purple, who celebrated her one hundredth birthday with a great family reunion to which came some fifteen hundred descendants of old Jorge and Elvira van Essen, and many other characters no less fascinating than the more important. And giving unity and continuity to the whole chronicle, there is Johnnie, charming and lovable, whose character and mind this story of the farm and the people who made it is designed to illumine. "The Farm" illumines not only the character of Johnnie, but of the whole generation that he represents and of a significant and splendid and tragic chapter of our history.

The manuscripts of some six hundred letters written by Arnold Bennett to his nephew, Richard Bennett, are coming up for sale in London shortly. They are to be published in book form.

Having It Both Ways

THE TRAGEDY OF RUSSIA. By Will Durant. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1933. $1.25.

Reviewed by ARTHUR RUHL

MR. WILL DURANT, wishing to enter Russia "unnoticed and unescorted," travelled by way of Japan and the trans-Siberian. His success was complete. In less than no time he was wallowing in all the distresses which assail the novice who ventures off the beaten track in the U. S. S. R., like an inexperienced swimmer being "boiled" in an unsympathetic surf.

At Omsk, where there was a change of trains, he found himself being charged at the rate of $100 a day in real money. He waited for hours, in the rain and out of it, to wangle tickets for the next Moscow train from the station commandant, and when the latter had melted sufficiently under the pressure of an introduction "from the most famous of American senators" to sell him the tickets, the conductor wouldn't let Mr. Durant aboard the train because the compartments were already preëmpted by Soviet bureaucrats. The toilet facilities were "unusable because of the poor eyesight of the Russians." The station waiting-room, packed with the usual herd of more or less filthy peasants, struck Mr. Durant as a glimpse of hell itself. Here was "poverty final and complete. We had never seen poverty like this, not even in China or India."

The shrieks of anguish which fill the first twenty pages of Mr. Durant's report are as ingenuous as they are heartfelt—for this sort of thing is the mere routine of travel in the Russian provinces and was common enough even in pre-revolutionary Russia once you ventured off the main express routes—but these merely physical reactions are less significant as a measure of the value of Mr. Durant's observations than the startling contrast between the mood of light-hearted optimism in which he crossed the eastern frontier and the mood of bitter disillusionment in which he writes after reaching the comparative luxuries of Moscow.

The book "is based upon a very brief visit to Russia in the summer of 1932. Whatever value it may have will depend upon the background of judgment, not upon the area of observation." Glancing into this background of judgment, we find Mr. Durant being asked in Vancouver, "before an audience of some two thousand persons," for his "opinion of the Communist experiment in Russia," and answering: "I am afraid that Communism cannot succeed, but I hope to God it does." As he and his travelling companion, "Ariel," crossed the border from Manchuria into Soviet Russia, "we were happy, and joined cordially with Russian passengers in singing communist songs," and "when we arrived at our first destination we were already enthusiastic Bolsheviks."

All this was in the summer of 1932, the fifteenth year of Russian Revolution, after whole libraries of books and millions of words of newspaper correspondence had been written pro and con—at a period, in short, in which a widely-read and successful popularizer like Mr. Durant must, one would suppose, know fairly well what it was all about. Just what communistic realities can have been floating in Mr. Durant's fancy when he told that Vancouver audience, on his way to Russia, that he "hoped to God Communism would succeed"; as he joined with such cordiality in singing communistic songs, as he and his companion arrived at their first destination "already enthusiastic Bolsheviks"?

How long since has communism, let alone Bolshevism and the Party dictatorship in Soviet Russia, had anything to do with "'liberty" as the latter had been known in the democracies of the western world?

If it was liberty Mr. Durant was looking for, he cut a rather absurd figure singing communistic songs as his train lumbered through Asiatic Russia and arriving at his first destination an enthusiastic Bolshevik. If it is Bolshevism as a political philosophy which seriously attracts him, why bother about such irrelevancies as liberty! You can't have it both ways.

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The Bowling Green

The Folder

THIS year has been, for the booksellers, what bibliographers call "a thin 12mo." They have kept their spirits up with good courage—reflected by occasional humorous remarks in their catalogues. Charles J. Sawyer Ltd. (Grafton Street, New Bond Street, London W.1) call their latest catalogue "An Antidote Against Melancholy." It includes a bone paper-knife given to Charles Dickens at Washington on his birthday, 1868. The good old Argosy Bookstores (45 Fourth Ave., New York City) style their current broadside "Midsummer Madness—Priced to Overcome August Diffidence." What a time for the sagacious collector to buy. Dauber & Pine list a good copy of *Moby Dick* (first edition) at $175, less 20% discount for cash. Same catalogue, a book with an alluring title, Grimestone: *Latin Depravity*. We'd like to put our nose to the Grimestone.

The Argosy catalogue lists the first issue of Sinclair Lewis's pamphlet *Cheap and Contented Labor* (1929) for $2.35. This report on conditions in a Southern cotton mill, says the Argosy catalogue, "is informed with intense feeling and controlled mordant irony which sometimes recall Swift's *Modest Proposal*." The sociological collector will note also in this catalogue Carl Sandburg's *The Chicago Race Riots* (1919) for $4.

Unfortunately in turning over these items we are just looking. Our fiscal status is like James Huneker's copy of Dreiser's *The Genius* which we see in an old Chicago auction catalogue—*a little rubbed, slightly shaken*. The old steeplejack's pencilled comments in this copy were apparently very caustic. We wonder who bought it.

Don't let the title, or any of the reviews, mislead you into supposing *The Paradine Case*, by Robert Hichens, to be a detective story. It's a novel built round a murder trial, a story of intense power and horror with a situation unique in our reading experience yet completely veracious and possible. The Word of Mouth Club, which is what makes the fortune of good books, will move this one fast and far.

Once every few years a preposterous old poem recurs vaguely to me—I found it long ago reprinted in "Queries and Answers" in the New York *Times*. I'm going to put it here so I can find it again when I need it. Which makes me think, what wonderful scrapbooks Miss Louella D. Everett (of Boston) must have. It is she who supplies so large a proportion of the poems asked for in the *Times*. Perhaps some day she'll publish an anthology.

Here's the poem—author unknown. It dates at least as far back as 1875, for it appeared in an anthology at that time.

"Old man! old man! for whom diggest thou this grave?"
I asked as I walked along;
For I saw in the heart of London's streets
A dark and a busy throng.

'Twas a strange, wild deed—but the wilder wish
Of the parted soul to lie
'Midst the troubled number of living men,
Who would pass him idly by!

So I said, "Old man, for whom diggest thou this grave,
In the heart of London town?"
And the deep-toned voice of the digger replied,
"We're laying a gas pipe down."

B. L. P. S. (Freeland, Michigan), in answer to our inquiry about Caroline Lockhart, author of that admirable book *The Dude Wrangler*, reports:

She lives in my old home county in Montana, has a large cattle ranch in wild, almost inaccessible territory and visits the county seat at rare intervals. She stays at my Dad's hotel and is always an interesting guest.

B. L. P. S. encloses a recent item from the *Picket-Journal*, Red Lodge, Montana:

Miss Caroline Lockhart, western author and ranchwoman in the Dryhead country of Carbon County, and her foreman, Dave Good, were in Red Lodge Tuesday and Wednesday. They report an invasion of crickets in the range country this side of the Big Horn.

A book to warm the heart of every sea-minded reader is John H. McCulloch's *A Million Miles in Sail*, which narrates the sea career of Captain C. C. Dixon, a Nova Scotiaman. Captain Dixon's father was once a shipmaster in the famous Black Ball Line, and in 1889 became skipper of the ship *Erin's Isle*. Young Dixon shipped in her as deck-boy, and was in her altogether seventeen years—almost one-third of his million miles at sea were travelled in her. I had always understood that William McFee was actually born aboard the *Erin's Isle* in 1881, but in a letter which Captain Dixon quotes Mr. McFee seems to qualify this legend. McFee wrote to Captain Dixon:

"I was practically born on her. We were out six months from Calcutta to London. The *Isle* got into London and I got out into the world at the same time."

Captain Dixon tells us that the worst storm he ever encountered, in a lifetime of seafaring, was in the *Erin's Isle* a few days out of New York (bound for Liverpool). He is famous among sailors for his habit of putting bottles overboard, with a message recording date and position, to test the drift of currents. Some of these bottles drifted extraordinary distances—and in the sea of literature this book also should stay long afloat for it is quite exceptional.—After writing this note I see that the book will not be published until August 25 (Dodd, Mead & Co., $3), but that isn't long to wait.

Another sea-association came to my mind in quite a different way. At a beach club on Long Island a friend brought out a bottle which bore a little paper cravat round its neck on which was printed:

"We are highly honoured that His Excellency Lord Bessborough the Governor-General of Canada has favoured Seagram's Rye Whiskies with his patronage." At once I thought of the passage in *A Personal Record* where Conrad tells how his career as a writer began in Bessborough Gardens, London. He was lodging there, in the indolence of a sailor temporarily away from sea, and one morning after breakfast he lit his pipe, rang the bell, and in a sudden impulse ordered the table cleared. Perhaps it was something in the weather—"an autumn day with an opaline atmosphere a veiled semi-opaque lustrous day with fiery points and flashes of red sunlight"—that made him think of the river in Borneo where he had seen Almayer. At any rate he had the table cleared and in a seizure that always remained a mystery to himself sat down to begin *Almayer's Folly*. That was in September 1889. As he recorded afterward, "From the moment I had in the simplicity of my mind written that page the die was cast."

The book was finished in May 1894, and published by Unwin in the spring of '95. I don't remember the tally of printings in England, but the first American printing was 650 copies—which was enough to last for 17 years, until April 1912.

Bessborough Gardens—I went to have a look at them once, but I don't believe the exact address of J. C.'s lodging is remembered—are just off the Vauxhall Bridge Road and not far from the Tate Gallery. That neighborhood seems to have been favored by Conrad for the finished MS of *Almayer* was sent off from 17 Gillingham Street, a small street also adjoining Vauxhall Bridge Road, behind Victoria Station. Some years ago Mitchell Kennerley showed me at the Anderson Galleries a number of Conrad's letters to Unwin. One of these was so touchingly characteristic of the beginning author in all ages that I took a copy—I hope there is no reason why I should not reprint it here:

8th Sept. 1894

Messrs. Fisher Unwin & Co.
Gentlemen,

On the 4th July 1894 there was delivered in your pubs offices of Paternoster Row a typewritten work.

Title: "Almayer's Folly"; it was enclosed in brown paper wrapper addressed to J. Conrad, 17 Gillingham St. S.W. and franked, for return by parcel post, by twelve 1d stamps. The brown paper package was put between two detached sheets of cardboard secured together by a string. One of the cardboard sheets bore your address. The boy messger produced the usual receipt slip, duly signed, but I do not remember the name or initials of the signature.

I venture now upon the liberty of asking you whether there is the slightest likelihood of the MS (Malay life, about 64,000 words) being read at some future time? If not, it would be—probably—no worse fate than it deserves, yet, in that case, I am sure you will not take it amiss if I remind you that, however worthless for the purpose of publication, it is very dear to me. A ridiculous feeling—no doubt—but not unprecedented I believe. In this instance it is intensified by the accident that I do not possess another copy, either written or typed.

I beg to apologize for taking up your time with this matter.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,
J. CONRAD

17, Gillingham Street, S.W.

There were four sequels to this letter which make the episode complete in every human vibration. On Oct. 4, 1894, Conrad wrote to Unwin his willingness to accept £20 for the copyright of *Almayer's Folly*. On May 26, 1895, he wrote, "Why cry on the roofs that I am a seaman? It gives a false impression." (How often I have wished that writers about Conrad would remember that.) On Oct. 19, 1896, he wrote, "As to my demands, which you might think excessive, it's just this: I can't afford to work for less than ten pence per hour." (He was then writing *The Nigger of the Narcissus*.)—On November 7, 1896, he wrote, "Most amazing! Two Cambridge dons wish to make my acquaintance!"

I have to thank Lord Bessborough's preference in whiskey for giving me some happy moments thinking about Joseph Conrad.

Speaking of ships, I have just seen with sorrow a little item in the New York *Herald Tribune* (August 11) that the barque *Guadalhorce* was lost with all hands off the coast of Cuba two months ago. She was almost the last of the old-timers; built in Majorca in the 70's. Felix Riesenberg and I once visited her at the 79th Street pier and (in case any readers keep files of the *Saturday Review*) I wrote about her in the Bowling Green, August 8, 1925.

From Otterville, Missouri, an old friend of the Bowling Green sends a Chinese translation of her own:

Chicago, Hotel Morrison, the place;
Walt Whitman's birthday the occasion;
The counter-girl my blithe informant.

I'd found a surge of Rotarymen
Bulging the Morrison lobby,
And blotting out the bulletin board.
So, to the chew-gum-clicking girl,
I ventured: "Can you tell me in which dining-room
The Whitman celebration is to be?"
A hasty reference to her card-file,
An even quicker voice that barked:
"They're givin' a dinner to Walter Whiteman
In the Kaymeo banquet room."

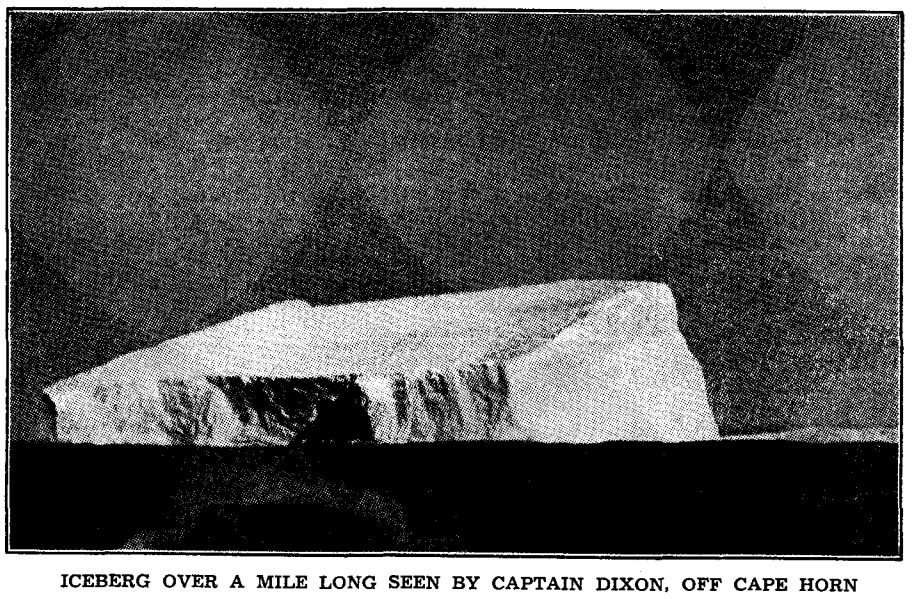
CATHARINE CRANMER.

In the Bowling Green of June 10, I reproduced the frontispiece of the 1640 edition of Shakespeare's Poems, chiefly to give our old friend and anti-Shakespearean George Frisbee the excitement of seeing what looked like sinister question-marks in the verses underneath the portrait.

Miss Mary Isabel Fry of the Huntington Library (San Marino, Calif.) very kindly sends me photostats from old books in that treasure-house which prove conclusively the point at issue—that something looking very much like the modern question-mark was used indifferently by antique printers both as query and as exclamation. For instance in Edward Hake's *Touchestone for this time present* (1574) we read "O state confused, O people deformed and full of outrage? . . . . O Englande, what hast thou imagined . . . . that even the verye Turkes and Sarazens, the verye Pagans and Miscreants, do thus reprove thee of iniquitye, and condempne thee of sinne?"

In this passage the first question-mark was plainly intended as exclamatory.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.



ICEBERG OVER A MILE LONG SEEN BY CAPTAIN DIXON, OFF CAPE HORN

Intimate Letters

LETTERS OF SUSAN HALE. Edited by Caroline P. Atkinson. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1933. $4.

THIS reissue of a volume which first appeared in 1918 should be welcome to those who take delight in intimate letters. Susan Hale, the daughter of a distinguished family of which Edward Everett and Lucretia were perhaps the best known, was herself a woman of engaging personality, clever, witty, with a vivacity that enlivened the most homely episodes and an intelligence that gave point to all her observations. Her lines were fallen in pleasant places, and in the course of life that included much travelling, she saw many lands, met a variety of persons of note, and made wherever she went numerous and devoted friends. Her letters are in the main addressed to the members of her family; they cover the period of years from 1848 to 1910—that is from girlhood almost to the time of her death—and they show a never-failing delight in friendship and family affection. In the main their subject matter is of intimate nature, the small doings of Miss Hale's daily round of teaching, or painting, or visiting, or journeying. But they are given a general interest by the bubling humor that enlivens them and the general animation of their writer. Not important in themselves, these "Letters of Susan Hale" are interesting as a footnote to their times.

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The New Books

Belles Lettres

CLOCKMAKER OF SOULS. By W. E. Collin. Kendall. 1933. $2.

Mr. Collin has devoted considerable time and research to the not particularly well known French writer, Paul Jean Toulet. The eccentric career and often brilliant work of this son of the Pyrenees attracted some attention in post-war Paris, and "La Jeune Fille Verte," generally esteemed his best book, has even been taken by a certain sect of younger men as a model. Although such notables as Giraudoux and Valéry have praised his style, the immediate importance of Toulet's work to an Anglo-Saxon reader is necessarily slight, and Mr. Collin might profitably have devoted his great patience and ability to a more significant subject, considering the surprising dearth of original criticism in English of the leading Frenchmen of the period. However, his book is a labor of love, and as such to be respected.

Fiction

FATAL GESTURE. By John Taintor Foote. Appleton-Century. 1933. $1.

This short story is published in book form for the benefit of a threefold public—Mr. Foote's admirers, anglers of the more bigoted and fanatical type, and antique-furniture maniacs. Or rather for the wives of anglers and the husbands of antique-furniture maniacs; for the story deals with the misadventures of George Potter the angler, whose wife sent him to an auction to bid in an early American cupboard. Unfortunately he happened to see there a particularly fine collection of fishing rods, on which other anglers also had their eyes; and so on. Mr. Foote writes with a pleasing smoothness and geniality, and wives of anglers and husbands of furniture collectors will probably find the story screamingly funny. The lay reader may have the feeling that he is attending a farce in a foreign language; he is aware that something highly amusing is going on, but he is not quite sure what it is all about.

THE UNENCHANTED CIRCLE. By Rupert Latimer. Appleton-Century. 1933. $2.

To qualify as superior light fiction, a novel needs more than a light touch. It should have spontaneity. When the characters are not attractive in themselves, the reader expects a satirical undercurrent to provide him with a focus. "The Unenchanted Circle" is unenchanted light fiction; its English family is silly without even becoming ludicrous; and the author tries too hard.

PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN. By John Hyde Preston. Harcourt, Brace. 1933. $2.

The shell came off this hard-boiled egg, and it got sticky. Against a background of suburban life at its most futile, complete with country clubs and floating speakeasies, where boredom leads to seductions and vice versa, we are privileged to meet Mrs. Peter Van Wyck, the woman of the portrait, from whose name one can infer the color of her blood. Ever since "The Sun Also Rises," the dream girls of hard-boiled fiction have included a large number of misunderstood nymphomaniacs; Peter differs from them in finding true love at last, much to her surprise. "Portrait of a Woman" raises the question whether the positive value of Hemingway's work, considerable as it is, can counterbalance the minus quantities produced by his imitators, among whom Mr. John Hyde Preston stands furthest south.

SEVEN YESTERDAYS. By Paul Hoffmann. Harpers. 1933. $2.

Associating the characteristic events and persons of his early life with each of the days of the week, the author has produced a sort of epitome of the autobiographical novel. The religious upbringing, the large family, and the small town, the adolescent pains, are all so typical that one can only be grateful for the book's brevity.

History

NEW YORK DURING THE CRITICAL PERIOD, 1783-1789. By E. Wilder Spaulding. Columbia University Press. 1933. $4.50.

The felicitous choice of Dr. Spaulding's volume to inaugurate a new historical series of the New York State Historical Association bodes well for the success of a most commendable venture. The present volume is well organized and thoroughly documented; the writing is notable for its grace and clarity. These gifts, applied to the study of a period intrinsically fascinating in its problems and its personalities, have resulted in a work which is indispensable to students of American history, deeply interesting even to those who have but a small knowledge of New York history. It is not merely a new chronicle of that historic struggle which led up to the adoption of the Federal constitution, but is a well-drawn picture of post-Revolutionary civilization in New York state. The author provides a welcome rehabilitation of Governor George Clinton, whose fame has been unduly eclipsed by that of his more brilliant but less popular rival, Alexander Hamilton. During his lifetime Clinton was the idol for public veneration, but Hamilton became the darling of the historian. It is to be hoped that Dr. Spaulding will undertake a detailed biography of the great Revolutionary governor.

Sociology

RED VIRTUE. By Ella Winter. Harcourt, Brace. 1933. $3.

This is a vivid picture of a transition period. Miss Winter went to Soviet Russia, lived there, studied, and, through a sincerely sympathetic approach, succeeded in grasping many of the ideas and aspirations of present-day Russia. Her narrative "covers, however sketchily, the wide range of morals and manners, ethics, personal relationships, art, and culture." Miss Winter is well aware of the philosophical foundations on which the Russian Marxians are attempting to erect a new order of society, "full speed ahead." But the historical determinism, with its dialectical

(*Continued on page* 58)

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE TOWNSEND MURDER MYSTERY *Octavus Roy Cohen* (Appleton-Century: $2.)	Detective Jim Hanvey surrounded by comic colored people solves puzzling killing of man nobody likes.	Printed from radio screed. Done entirely in dialogue, plus annoying stage directions. Fanatics may enjoy it.	Museum piece
THE RAVENELLE RIDDLE *E. Best Black* (Loring & Mussey: $2.)	Disappearance of girl followed by murders of cousin and servant girl with shady past involves Peter Strangely, Yankee 'tec in London setting.	Opium smuggling, ingenious cryptograms, adventures in London underworld main features of tale with confused plot but much action.	Fair
THE HOUSE ON THE MARSH *J. Jefferson Farjeon* (Dial Press: $2.)	Bachelor en route to fishing cabin in British marshes finds dead man, unconscious girl, gray kitten, and action.	Detectives only incidental in fast-paced thriller of murder, robbery, hidden treasure, arson.	Excellent
MURDER ON TOUR *Todd Downing* (Putnams: $2.)	Strangler eliminates three of group touring Mexico before San Antonio sleuth nabs the guilty parties.	Colorful new background heightens interest of well worked out yarn of curio crooks and typical tourists.	Readable

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The PHŒNIX NEST

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

A LICK AND A PROMISE

NEXT week I intend to review *Edgar Lee Masters's* "The Serpent in the Wilderness," *Frances Frost's* "Pool in the Meadow," and perhaps several other volumes of recent poetry under the heading of "Round about Parnassus," but this week I have several interesting communications to lay before you, and therefore cannot pay so much attention to poetry. I shall, however, take time to inform you that, for the reasonable sum of four dollars and seventy-five cents, you can now obtain from Harcourt, Brace & Company, *Louis Untermeyer's* "Modern American Poetry" and "Modern British Poetry" anthologies in a combined edition on india paper, a treasury of the best that has been done in our age, and a well-bound and well-printed volume. It will certainly strengthen the poetry of your library.

THE TESTAMENT OF LIGHT

An anthology of spiritual wisdom, selected by *Gerald Bullett* and published by Alfred A. Knopf, is drawn from many ages and literatures and entitled "The Testament of Light." Behind all religious experience, contends Mr. Bullett, there lies a common dynamic idea. This fact his quotations from forty-four writers go to prove. *Hugh Walpole* has hailed the anthologist as "one of the best living writers of English prose," and prominent ministers have found this book stimulating in its spiritual insight. The anthologist wishes it to be read "in the order given, regarding it as a single continuing discourse lightened (but not broken) by lyrical interludes." Particulars of authorship and source are given in an index, to which certain notes are appended. The book is in no sense the ordinary mystical anthology, and there are as many prose extracts in it as those of poetry.

Where the anthologist has failed "to find some particular part of (his) thought stated by another," he has "resorted to the unusual expedient of writing, as best (he) could, the passage (he) was in search of." Otherwise we hear the voices of *Thomas Traherne, Rabelais, St. Paul, William Penn, Blake, Uuamuno, Dostoievsky, Wordsworth, Emerson, Santayana, Confucius,* and so on, with certain poetry by the moderns.

A WONDER COMES TO LIGHT

Christopher Morley informs me that he has discovered a copy of my only and fortunately long out-of-print novel, "The First Person Singular" in, of all places, the Robin Adair Wee Coffee Shoppe on Northern Boulevard near Lakeville Road, Great Neck, L. I. There also you may purchase waffles, sandwiches, salted almonds; and the motto of the "Shoppe" is from that favorite popular song of mine:

Just around the corner
There's a rainbow in the sky,
So *let's* have another cup of Coffee,
And *let's* have another piece of Pie!

There were three books altogether in the Shoppe, but when I inquired of Christopher what were the other two, he replied blandly, "Oh, they were terrible!"

RIGHT OUT OF THE MAIL BAG

Now for those communications, which are all on the credit side, though the first involves a slip not to my own credit. It comes from *W. S.* ("*Bill*") *Hall,* who has, incidentally, been interviewing bookshops recently for old *Quercus* over there on the back page. He writes:

I'm so sorry you had to bang your head last week, and I'm sure I don't want you to do it again *but;* under "Lo, the Poor Illustrator" I have to take issue with you. You'll see too, how apt in one particular is your sub-title.

I'm not going to quarrel about your list of favorite illustrators much as I disagree with your selection—most specially the Moderns. That after all is opinion. But when you say "Surely *Cruikshank* did something for *Dickens's* 'Pickwick'" then I must answer "No, he didn't." Because Cruikshank while he did do the pictures for "Boz," "Oliver Twist," and "Grimaldi" did not illustrate Pickwick. *Robert Seymour* created the Mr. Pickwick we know and the effort cost him his life.

Dickens was a fury to his illustrators (witness the cancelled plates and various states of illustrations in his first editions.) Dickens was a first class prude. Illustrations were cancelled by him, not because they were poorly drawn, but because too much of a stocking showed here or a bust there. His controversies with Cruikshank—no slight prude himself—were concerned not only with such moral questions as the above but such petty ones as proved too much for Seymour. He surpassed himself with Seymour, who did the original cover and the first seven pictures for the Pickwick parts. Please note there is no word when we meet Mr. P. in the text, as to what he looked like, except that the "gigantic brain of P. was working beneath that forehead, and that the beaming eyes of P. were twinkling behind those glasses." Not much for the artist to go on. Nevertheless Seymour gave us—or gave Dickens—the now familiar figure of the hero, and to settle all argument as to who "created" the likeness, the figure bears an exact resemblance to a character used earlier by Seymour.

R. W. Buss supplanted Seymour early in the issue of the parts. Seymour blew out his brains. Buss did two plates and in turn gave way to *Phiz* (*Hablot K. Browne*). And Phiz remained Dickens's illustrator—at least so he is in my copies of "David Copperfield," "Chuzzlewit," "Bleak House," "Little Dorrit," "Dombey," etc. For the full—and I believe the true—story of the Dickens-Seymour affair, see "When Mr. Pickwick went Fishing" by *Samuel W. Lambert,* published 1924 by The Brick Row Book Shop.

Florence Ayscough, the renowned translator of Chinese Literature, sends us this from Guernsey in the Channel Isles:

The very amusing verses by *Miss Ryerson* in your Phœnix Nest of July 15 have had a sequel in this tiny island. *Miss Troughton,* Headmistress of a girl's school here, is helping me with the final preparation for the Press of my second volume, *Tu Fu's* "The Autobiography of a Chinese Poet." After lunch *Maude Meagher* (whose "Fantastic Traveller" I know you have read) left us "to it." She came down at tea-time boasting of her own good "go" at 6th Century Byzantium (the background for her forthcoming novel) only to hear us confess that we had each had a delightful nap; she jeered at us throughout tea and later, as I was preparing for my legitimate sleep that night she presented me with the enclosed verses. I should explain that *Ai* is my Chinese surname. *Sung Ch'ing*—Pine-tree Elf—is my Chinese name for her.

PORTRAIT OF AI AT WORK

Bring in the School's Head Mistress to her aid;
On the Red Door the "OUT" sign is displayed;
The Inner Door made fast; telephone checked;
Sung Ch'ing sent to her room by HINT Direct;
The Black Pug vanished; Nora and the Staff
Tip toe on the Red Stairs.
Let not a laugh
Nor murmur break the silence; not a word
Pollute the Sacred Portal.
Nothing is heard
Behind the Barrier of that Blank White Door
By us who hover . . . But the Scholar's Snore!
With bated breath we dream the Poet's Brush
Painting strange Signs; in Reverential Hush
We vision Laboring Thinkers; Bending Brows;
Tremendous Tryst with Ancient Thought. (*They Drowse*)
We eye the symbol of that closed Room
And muse that inward, in that Pregnant Gloom,
Brains hum like bees in hive . . . Well, let us keep
Our childlike trust . . . Behind that door They Sleep!

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"One of our most lyric writers and piercing thinkers . . . the presence of an earnest mind strengthens every page of the book . . . worth cherishing in this headlong period."—From an editorial in the *N. Y. Times.*

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*. As for reasons of space ninety percent of the inquiries cannot be answered in print, a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

R. A., Hollywood, wants a book on Southern California gardening, "something that tells me what to plant and when. And what to plant in the shade and in the sun. I can't find anything that isn't nearly all landscaping."

CLIMATE is the basis of "Gardening in California" (Doubleday, Doran), by Sydney B. Mitchell, a practical gardener, a guide that has been popular long enough to prove it practical. It shows how to plan, make, and care for a garden from bulbs to trees, paying especial attention to flowers that grow best in this section.

"The *Review* produces a wonderful excitement," says R. A., "in this area of sterility of the country. The world knows through advertisement that oranges grow here. If you could send a good rousing thunder storm with the magazine you'd save us having to turn the hose on the window pane to make us feel at home." This reached my desk just as bulbs on nearby thermometers had decided it ain't gonna rain no more, and, quietly burst.

F. A. S., Sausalito, Cal., has become deeply interested in the study of Margaret Fuller, and asks if Nathan, the man to whom Margaret was engaged, ever published the letters that passed between them. Mr. James Nathan afterward found it more convenient to become Mr. James Gotendorf; it never was convenient for him to become really engaged to Margaret Fuller. It was much more in his sentimento-business vein to moon along in one of those indeterminate soul-unions out of which a gentleman in those days could so easily slide. So, when she had helped him to get to Europe and he had there become engaged to somebody else, he slid. When she wanted the letters back, he sent her noble reasons for holding firmly to something that might one day come in handy. So in 1903 appeared "Love Letters of Margaret Fuller" (Appleton) to which he contributed a nice, smug introduction. There is also one by Julia Ward Howe which shows once more how hard it was for anyone to have anything to do with Margaret Fuller and retain a sense of humor; she even manages to spoil Carlyle's "Gad, she'd better!" joke by getting it just not right.

This touching one-sided correspondence—for the letters, to anyone who can read at all between lines, become ineffably pathetic—is long out of print. But there are other books on the lady that Regis Michaud in "Autour d'Emerson" (Bossard, 1924) called "une romantique d'outremer." She is in Gamaliel Bradford's "Portraits of American Women" (Houghton Mifflin), taking the place of T. W. Higginson's book about her in their American Men of Letters series, which now is out of print. Knopf now publishes Katherine Anthony's "Margaret Fuller," which was one of the very first biographies on psycho-analytical lines. Helen MacMaster's "Margaret Fuller as Literary Critic" was one of the Buffalo University Monographs, 1928. Julia Ward Howe wrote a book about her in 1883, in the vein one might expect from its nearness to her romantic life and tragic death; it is still to be found in public libraries and so is F. A. Braun's study of transcendentalism, "Margaret Fuller and Goethe" (Holt)—and of course she is in Warner's Library, that lively mausoleum of literature.

MR. GORHAM MUNSON writes: "You are correct in saying in the July 22 issue that none of Major Douglas's books are now published in America. Harcourt, Brace published Douglas's 'Economic Democracy' in 1920; it is now out of print. There are excellent prospects now for the Fall publication in America of one of Major Douglas's works, but it would be premature to announce the reports we have heard. Major Douglas's books can be ordered through the New Economics Group, 425 Fourth Avenue, New York; we keep a small stock on hand. Isaac Pitman, 2 West 45th Street, N. Y. C., distribute 'This Age of Plenty,' by C. Marsha Hattersley. This is the popular classic of Social Credit. On August tenth John Day is publishing 'Bankers Versus Consumers,' by Guy W. Mallon, the first Social Credit book of American authorship."

Mr. Munson sends a prospectus for the first American Social Credit magazine, *New Democracy*, a bi-monthly review of national economy and the arts, to be edited by Herbert Bruce Brougham and Gorham Munson and published by W. A. Nyland, New Economics Group, at two dollars a year. *The New English Weekly* (Social Credit) circulates in America; its New York office is at Coward-McCann, Inc., 55 Fifth Avenue, N. Y. C.

M. I. B., Wilmington, Delaware, asks if I knew, when I replied to a recent inquiry as to a possible original of Keats's Grecian Urn, that Professor O. W. Firkins discussed in a preface to one of his plays the question of a specific urn as his inspiration, concluding that there was no such urn. She strongly recommends the three volumes of these plays by the late Oscar W. Firkins, to the inquirer for plays featuring famous women, saying that she sent for them after reading the review in the *Saturday Review of Literature* on February 11, and that reading the plays was one of the high lights of her year. These plays, which were strongly recommended by another correspondent as well, are published by the University of Minnesota Press: in "Bride of Quietness" Fanny Brawne is in the title play, Elizabeth Barrett Browning in "Turnpikes in Arcady," and the three Brontës in "Empurpled Moors." Chekhov's wife, Olga Knipper Chekhova, appears in "The Revealing Moment," title play of another volume, and Jenny Dacquin, the "Inconnue" of Merimée, in "The Unknown Woman" in the same volume. In "Two Passengers for Chelsea," the title play of the third volume, Jane Carlyle is the leading figure. Good reading plays being none too prevalent, it is with gratitude that I pass on these praises.

A JOHN DAY Item

RIDER OF THE NIGHT
a novel by
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The New Books

(*Continued from page 56*)

materialism, that forms the background, or rather the pedestal, of the rigorous Marxian ideology, does not receive any extensive consideration from her. She is more concerned with human values than with the dominating factors of the Soviet experiment.

In her ambitious desire to present a complete picture, contrasting old and new Russia, Miss Winter, again and again, displays a not too critical acceptance of not quite authoritative information. However, though her attempts to bring out the cultural background are often inadequate and shortsighted, she does succeed in allaying much of the fear and confusion spread abroad in years past by vituperative journalism. She has compiled a vast amount of material and citation, organized her material with admirable intellectual perspicuity, and presented an interesting report upon the constantly changing, human and humane, Russian mass. "Red Virtue" can be recommended to all who are seeking to understand day to day life in Soviet Russia.

Latest Books Received

BELLES LETTRES

English Literature in the Twentieth Century. J. W. Cunliffe. Macmillan. $3.

BIOGRAPHY

The Herschel Chronicle. Ed. C. A. Lubbock. Macmillan. $6. *Mellon's Millions.* H. O'Connor. Day. $3. *Sidney and Beatrice Webb.* M. A. Hamilton. Houghton. $3.50. *Old Gimlet Eye.* L. Thomas. Farrar $2.75 net. *Marie Stopes.* A. Maude. Put. $3. *Great Lives: Edward VII,* by H. E. Wortham; *William Blake,* by A. Clutton-Brock; *Robert Burns,* by C. Carswell; *Sheridan,* by W. A. Darlington; *Thackeray,* by G. U. Ellis; *H. M. Stanley,* by A. J. A. Symons. Macmil. 75 cents a vol.

FICTION

The Golden Falcon. Smith-Haas. $2.50. *Mrs. Barry.* F. Niven. Dut. $2.50. *Plebian's Progress.* F. Tilsley. Covici. $2.25. *Unmarried Wife.* A. L. Furman. Macaul. $2. *Portrait of a Woman.* J. H. Preston. Harcourt. $2. *Three Roads from Paradise.* L. Baretto. Farrar. $2 net. *The Shakespeare Murderers.* N. Gordon. Holt. $2. *The Dream Again.* J. Fisher. Holt. $2. *Murder on Tour.* T. Dowing. Put. $2. *The Wheel of Life.* H. zur Mühlen. Stokes. $2. *The Townsend Murder Mystery.* O. R. Cohen. Apple. $2. *Mr. Dayton, Darling!* Lady M. Cameron. Coward. $2. *Vipers' Triangle.* F. Mauriac. Shred & Ward. $2.25. *Star Magic.* C. Pollock. Farrar. $2 net. *Dark Rosaleen.* M. Bowen. Houghton. $2. *Earl Derr Biggers Tells Ten Stories.* Bobbs. $2. *Murder in Bermuda.* W. Sharp. Kendall. $2. *The Commissar of the Gold Express.* S. V. Matveyev. International. $1. *The Table in a Roar.* J. Ferguson. Dut. $2. *Way of Love.* M. G. Fawcett. Vanguard. $2. *Honor among Women.* G. Gibbs. Apple. $2. *The Summer Flood.* G. Rees. Day. $2.50.

FOREIGN

Le Coeur des Etats-Unis. M. Gijsen. Courtrai-Vermaut.

GOVERNMENT

Government of the People. D. W. Brogan. Harp. $4.

HISTORY

The History of the Balkan Peninsula. F. Schevill. Harcourt. $5.

INTERNATIONAL

Toward a United Front. L. Samson. Farrar. $2.50 net. *Youth in Soviet Russia.* K. Mehnert. Harcourt. $2. *British Preëminence in Brazil.* A. K. Manchester. Univ. of N. Caro. $3.50.

JUVENILE

Powder. E. A. and L. Stanley. Smith-Haas. *Dark Circle of Branches.* L. Adams Armer. Longmans. $2.50. *Mischief in Mayfield.* P. Bacon. Harcourt. $1.75.

MISCELLANEOUS

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POETRY

A Mountain Township. W. Hard. Harcourt. $2. *Modern American Poetry. Modern British Poetry.* Ed. L. Untermeyer. Harcourt. $4.75. *Pool in the Meadow.* F. Frost. Houghton. $2.

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Trade Winds

By P. E. G. QUERCUS

☞Young Quercus is back from his vacation, and suspects an ulterior motive behind the effusiveness of Old Quercus's greeting. This welcome has even extended to the composition of a paragraph by Old Q. on what Young Q. has been doing. It came as a surprise to Young Q. to find this item in Old Q.'s copy:

☞Young Quercus, though absent on his vacation, can't keep his mind off the book business. He's been reading *Anthony Adverse,* which he says took two solid $\frac{1}{1200}$ weeks of his time. He reckons this as of his Waking Life. A lifetime of 70 years, sezee, is 3640 weeks. Allowing ⅓ of life for sleep—or a leetle more than ⅓ in the drowsy Quercus family—say 2400 weeks is the Waking Lifetime of an average Quercus. 2 weeks into $2400 = \frac{1}{1200}$

And Young Q. adds that he thinks the fraction was worth it. Slogan for Farrar & Rinehart: Gamble $\frac{1}{1200}$ of your life on *Anthony Adverse.*

☞Publishers inform Quercus that their code, now in process of revision before being submitted to the authorities at Washington, is being designed to cover the major problems which have harassed the book trade during the late lean years. It is too early to report in detail what the code will propose, but the design is to eliminate various practices which have worked against the interests of the retail bookseller. One of the targets will probably be price-cutting, which has become an important objective in other fields as well as publishing, in the current battle for "fair competition." For many years the anti-trust laws have protected this practice, and it has taken three years of depression to convince the public and their representatives in authority that price-cutting may not be in the ultimate interests of the consumer. ☞Other practices which the code is aiming to stabilize on an equitable basis are remaindering of books and releasing of plates for reprint rights—both of them legitimate and necessary trade functions, but sometimes abused in the past by publishers who remaindered or released cheap reprints too soon after the original edition; thus penalizing the bookseller and his customers who had bought the original edition at the original price. Also this created the erroneous impression that book prices were out of all proportion to the publisher's costs.

☞Indeed the proposed code seems to be on the track of alleviating all the bookseller's problems except that of getting the customers into the store. For this purpose Quercus proposes a Consumer's Code for Book Readers. This is prompted by the feeling that the consumer's NRA label is at present too easy to obtain: the consumer Does His Part merely by refusing to patronise those enterprises which are not Doing Their Part; altogether too negative a proposition. Quercus can make only one definite suggestion for the Book Readers' Code: namely, that every reader, in order to qualify, agrees to buy a book every time he fails to return one that he borrowed within a given time. Other suggestions for the Readers' Code will be gratefully received and printed in these columns.

☞Apropos of this, Quercus notes with interest the Blue Eagle Luncheon, given on August 14 by the Advertising Club and the Better Business Bureau of New York, at which Miss Fannie Hurst spoke for the consumer. Quercus would like to know where Miss Hurst stands as a literary consumer, and has no doubt that her standing is high.

☞One further notation as to codes: if the authors want one, Quercus modestly suggests that the Application for Author's License, printed in these columns in June (advt.), be used as a basis.

☞The neatest trick of the week in literature (send it to *The New Yorker* and see if you get $5) occurs in P. G. Wodehouse's otherwise perfectly proofread—indeed otherwise perfectly everything—*Heavy Weather:* where Beach, the butler, "Drew up the toe of his left shoe and rather coyly scratched his left calf with it." Quercus feels that "coyly" is hardly the *mot juste.*

☞Old Quercus wondered whether we really needed two books about Flush the Spaniel, until he discovered that one—Virginia Woolf's—is about Elizabeth Barrett's Flush, the other about Katherine Cornell's dog, which set a record for stage-brokenness—or staged a record for house-brokenness—during the run of *The Barretts of Wimpole Street.*

☞They are telling Quercus that Barnaby Ross and Ellery Queen are the same man. Quercus cannot fit the internal evidence to the external, having greatly enjoyed what our Criminal Record operative called the alphabet soup mysteries, although standing completely alone in failing to make the grade with the geographical endeavors of the Queen sleuths. ☞Houghton Mifflin is publishing *Death Behind the Door* by Victor MacClure, containing a clue printed in invisible ink. Any reader who finds it will get another mystery story free from the publishers. This does not interest our Criminal Recorder, who gets plenty of mysteries as it is, but it does interest Old and Young Quercus, who would like occasionally to print this column in invisible ink. ☞Norton reports that Phoebe Atwood Taylor, who wrote *The Mystery of the Cape Cod Players,* is so expert in Cape Cod dialect that Cabell Greet asked her for data for his book on American speech. This surprises Quercus, to whom the dialect seemed the weakest part of the *Cape Cod Players,* reading more like the conventional western drawl than like the clipped, salty speech of the Cape-enders; but Quercus must admit that Joe Lincoln writes it the same way. ☞Final note on mysteries: Quercus is curious to know the origin of the slogan "Horler for Excitement," and how much good it has done the four publishers of Sydney Horler who have in turn employed it.

Sequels Dept.—Quercus read with interest Pete Howe's profile of Cedric Crowell, manager of the Doubleday, Doran Book Shops, in a recent *Publishers' Weekly.* The title, "Cedric Crowell, The Chain's Strongest Link," is a departure from the title used by the P. W. a few years ago for Clifford Orr's article: "Cedric Crowell, The Strongest Link in the Chain." Quercus hopes that title trouble will not prevent the trade papers from printing more about Cedric Crowell. The more that is known about his ideas and activities, the better for the book trade.

☞Sarah Ball writes to remind Quercus of the "mark for book travellers to shoot at," established by Britton and Johnston in a Ford roadster. Miss Ball has been shooting at it in a baby Austin: 8,200 miles through New England and New York since May 1, distributing 4,500 Modern Library books to 100 stations on the way. She tells of one amusing incident that happened in the Adirondacks: "Scene, large fashionable hotel. Two well dressed ladies descend from an automobile and walk over to my Austin. One dilates on her fondness for long stories. I show her *The Magic Mountain.* She goes on to say to her friend, 'I am reading such a lovely *long* story now. It is called *Anthony Perverse.*'"

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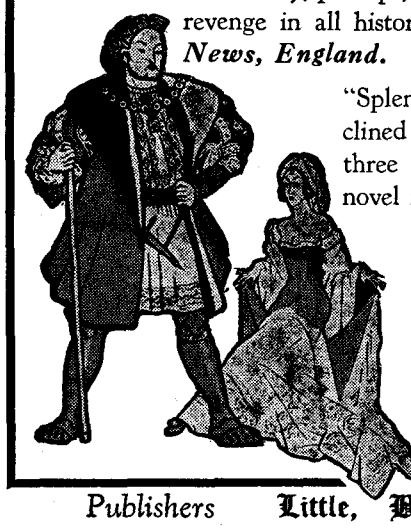

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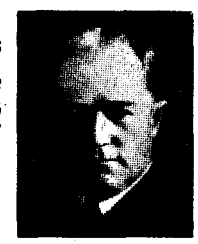

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